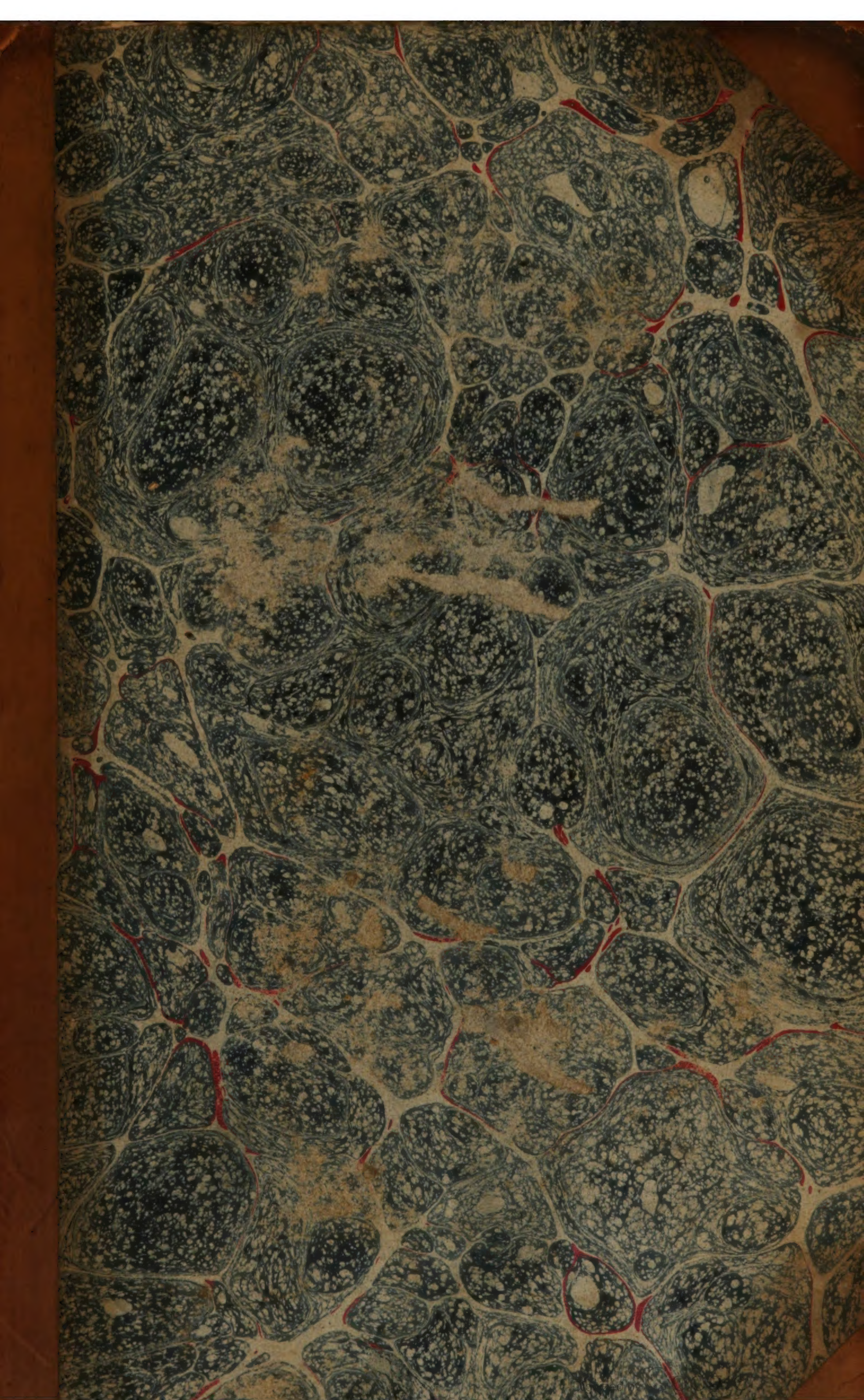
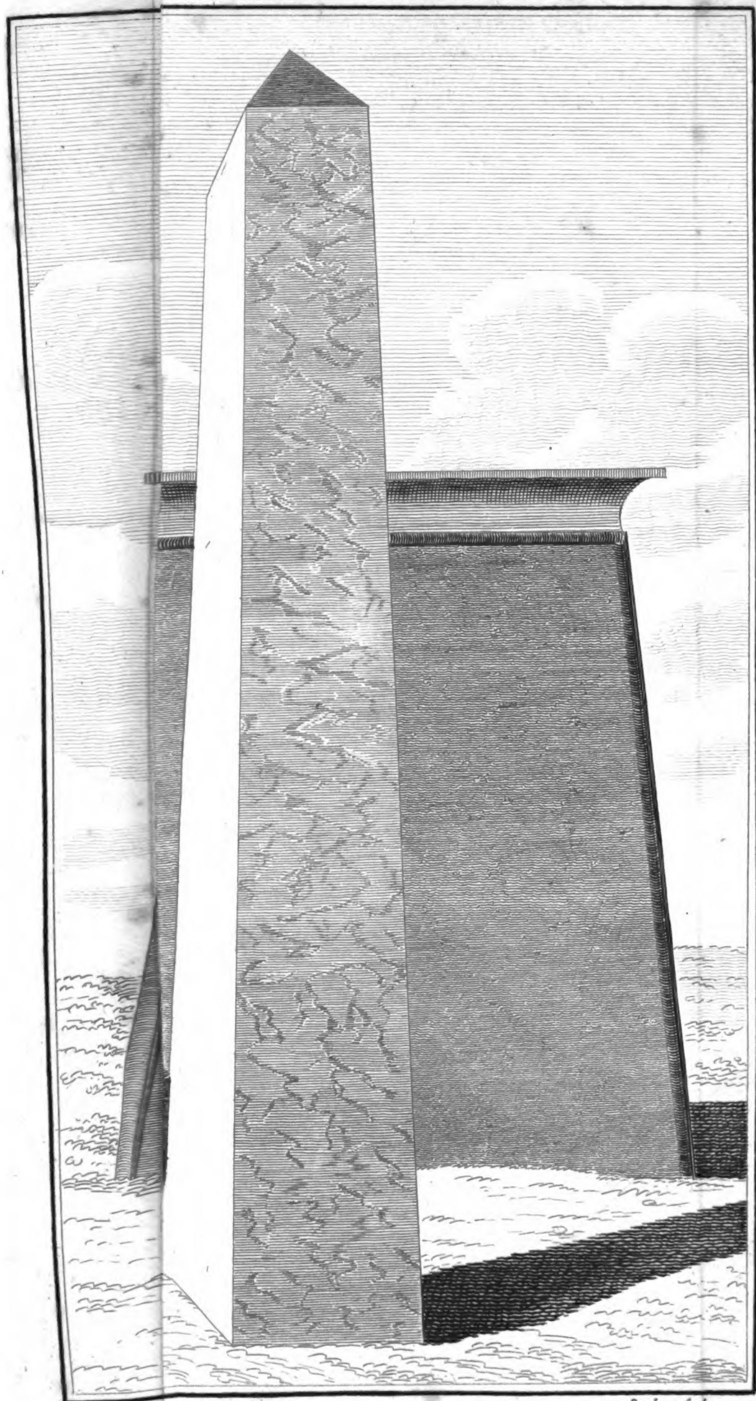




The p WING, *the* GLOBE, *and the* SERPENT,
Constiront.

No. O sacred to Osiris.

INDIAN ANTIQUITIES:

OR,

DISSERTATIONS

RELATIVE TO

THE ANCIENT GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS,
THE PURE SYSTEM OF PRIMEVAL THEOLOGY,
THE GRAND CODE OF CIVIL LAWS,
THE ORIGINAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT,
THE WIDELY-EXTENDED COMMERCE, AND
THE VARIOUS AND PROFOUND LITERATURE,

OF

HINDOSTAN:

COMPARED, THROUGHOUT, WITH THE

RELIGION, LAWS, GOVERNMENT, AND LITERATURE,

OF

PERSIA, EGYPT, AND GREECE.

THE WHOLE INTENDED AS INTRODUCTORY TO, AND ILLUSTRATIVE OF

THE HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN,

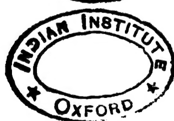
UPON A COMPREHENSIVE SCALE.

VOL. III.

In which the SACRED EDIFICES and SYMBOLICAL RITES of HINDOSTAN and EGYPT are compared.

LONDON:

PRINTED, FOR THE AUTHOR, BY W. BULMER AND CO. CLEVELAND-ROW;
AND SOLD BY J. WHITE, FLEET-STREET.
1806.

TO

Sir WILLIAM SCOTT, Knt. LL.D.

HIS MAJESTY'S ADVOCATE-GENERAL,

CHANCELLOR OF THE DIOCESE

OF LONDON,

AND A

MEMBER OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT,

THIS PORTION OF THE

INDIAN THEOLOGY,

A SUBJECT

NOT TOTALLY UNCONNECTED

WITH THAT PROFESSION

IN WHICH HE FILLS WITH

HONOUR SO DISTINGUISHED A STATION,

IS RESPECTFULLY AND GRATEFULLY

INSCRIBED,

BY HIS OBLIGED OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THOMAS MAURICE.

Directions to the Book-binder for placing the Plates.

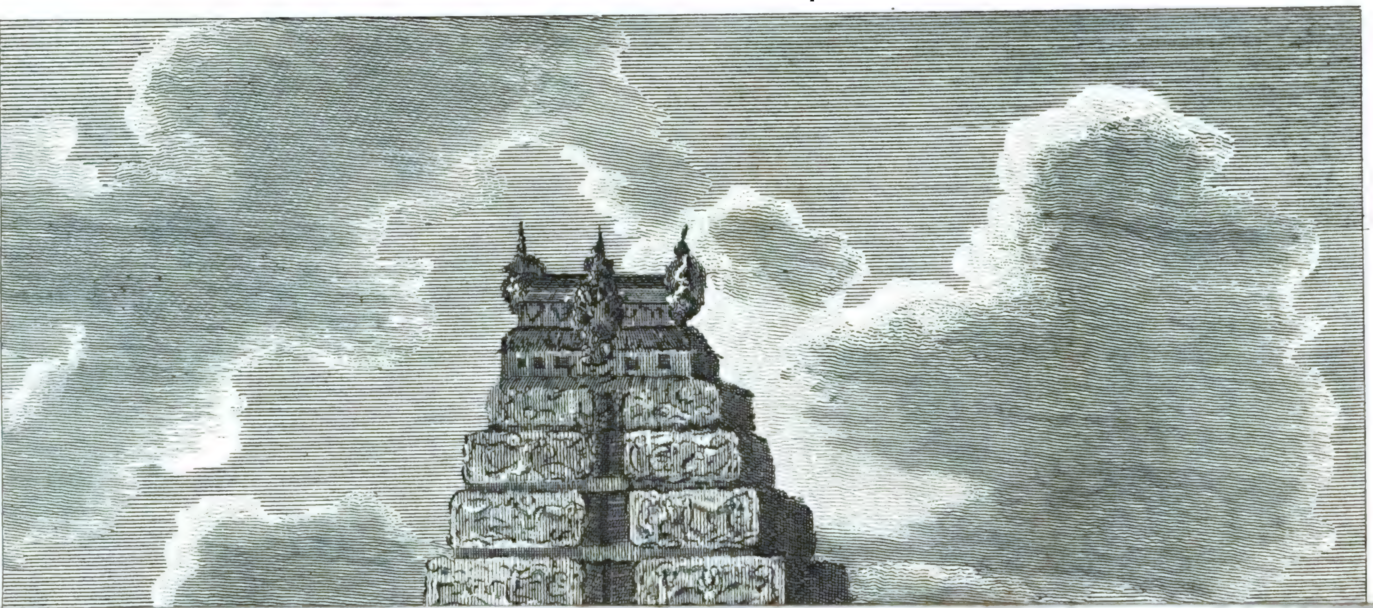
PREFACE.

THE Reader, during this continued Dissertation on the INDIAN THEOLOGY, is earnestly requested occasionally to advert to the ample prospectus prefixed to it in a former portion of this work: by that means, he will be better enabled to comprehend the plan pursued by the author in the course of so extensive an investigation. From consecrated groves and subterraneous caverns, he is here introduced into those stupendous structures, the pagodas of Hindostan; and as, in the former volume, the Indian and Egyptian sacred caverns were compared, so, in the present, the parallel is extended to the erected temples of either country. The same

eminent Sanscreet scholars, MR. HALHED, SIR WILLIAM JONES, and MR. WILKINS, who were his guides before in discussing the mysterious rites paid in those caverns to *the solar orb and fire*, and in unfolding all the wonders of the *sidereal metempsychosis*, will attend his progress through the DELTA and the THEBAIS; and, for the first time that the attempt has in any extent been undertaken, the Antiquities of INDIA will be made to illustrate those of EGYPT.

The Author would have been happy to have concluded in this volume his strictures on the Indian Theology, but he found that the very curious and interesting subject of the ORIENTAL TRIADS OF DEITY opened so vast a field for inquiry, and, withal, led to such important consequences in our own system of theology, that it was utterly impossible to contract it within the narrow limits he had prescribed himself. The *present* is by no means the period for suppressing any additional testimonies to the truth of one of the fundamental articles of that noble system, and he trusts that he has brought together such a body of evidence as will decisively

establish the following important facts; first, that in the SEPHIROTH, OR THREE SUPERIOR SPLENDORS, of the ancient Hebrews may be discovered the three hypostases of the CHRISTIAN TRINITY; secondly, that this doctrine flourished through nearly all the empires of Asia A THOUSAND YEARS BEFORE PLATO WAS BORN; and, thirdly, that the grand cavern-pagoda of ELEPHANTA, the oldest and most magnificent temple of the world, is neither more nor less than A SUPERB TEMPLE TO A TRI-UNE GOD.



Barlow sculp

THE GREAT PAGODA OF TANJORE.

To William Hodges Esq.r this Plate, engraved by his permission from his Designs in India, is gratefully inscribed by his faithfull humble Servant

CHAP. II.

THE TEMPLES OF INDIA, EGYPT, AND GREECE, EXAMINED AND COMPARED; INCLUDING AN EXTENSIVE HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT OF THE ORIENTAL NATIONS IN ARCHITECTURE; PARTICULARLY IN SACRED ARCHITECTURE.

SECTION I.

The first-erected Temples formed to resemble Groves and Caverns.—The stupendous Magnitude and Elevation of the Indian Pagodas.—The most ancient and celebrated in Hindostan, viz. that of JAGGERNAUT*—that of* BENARES*—that of* MATTRA*—that of* TRIPPETTY*—and that of* SERINGHAM,*—successively and minutely described.—An affecting*

Story relative to the first Defilement of Seringham by the European Armies.—The amazing Revenues which these and other Pagodas anciently enjoyed.—40,000 Souls supported by the Revenues of SERINGHAM *alone.—A more accurate Survey of their internal Sculptures, and a Description of the monstrous Idols adored in them.*—EGYPT *and* INDIA *seem to have assembled in these Pagodas the Animals deemed more peculiarly sacred to each Country; as, for instance, the* MEMPHIAN BULL *and the* CNEPH *of Egypt are discovered in the* BULL *of Seeva and the* SERPENTS *at Elephanta—while the* RAM, *sacred to* JUPITER, *and the* GOAT, *to* PAN, *are seen blended with the* APE *of* RAMA, *the* RHINOCEROS, *and the* ELEPHANT.

EMERGING from the deep shade of caverns, where the *image of the solar orb* was adored, and from the still deeper obscurity of subterraneous hieroglyphics, we shall traverse with increased pleasure the regions illumined by the glorious SUN himself. Let us now contemplate those more conspicuous, but not less majestic,

monuments of antiquity, THE PAGODAS THAT ADORN THE SURFACE, and erect their lofty summits in every quarter, of HINDOSTAN. To the solemn mysteries of superstition, celebrated in caves and amidst the secret recesses of the secluded forest, succeeded the not less splendid and ostentatious worship, practised in the more ancient of these superior temples: temples constructed of such enormous dimensions, that the bigoted natives think them, equally with the caverns we have described, the work of invisible agents. Most of them are of an astonishing height and extent; while the stones, of which they are composed, are of a magnitude hardly credible. The height, for instance, of the pyramidal gateway, leading to the magnificent pagoda of CHILLAMBRUM, on the coast of Coromandel, exceeds 120 feet; the circumference of the outward wall of that of SERINGHAM extends nearly four miles; and the stones, that form the stately roof of its principal gateway to the South, are thirty-three feet long*

* Cambridge's War in India, p. 25, Oct. Edit. I cite Mr. Cambridge in this place, not in preference to Mr. Orme, but because Mr. Orme, though he bears testimony to the magnificence of the stones that form this gateway, does not give their exact dimensions; he only says, "they are still larger than those that form the pillars of it."

and five and a half in diameter. We are equally awed by the majestic appearance of these august fanes, and struck with wonder at the laboured decorations which are displayed on their surface. In these sublime structures, indeed, the polished elegance which characterises the Grecian architecture has no share. The reigning features are rude magnificence and massy solidity; and these have been thought still more strongly to point out "the hand of those indefatigable artists who fabricated the pyramids, the sphynxes," and the other vast colossal statues of Egypt.

While we range through these immense fabrics, we can scarely yet consider ourselves as entirely emancipated from the gloom of the ancient groves and caves described in the former volume; so great, in many instances, is the similitude between them This similitude first gave rise to an Essay on the origin and progress of Oriental architecture, which was originally intended to have been inserted in the Dissertation on the Literature, Arts, and Sciences of Hindostan; but, as it is immediately connected with the subject of the present volume, and as the vast field which I have undertaken to explore will not allow of the appearance of

that portion of my work for a long period, from my eagerness and anxiety to present the historical part of it to my readers, it is inserted in this chapter, in which an extensive parallel is drawn between the sacred edifices of India and Egypt. In fact, of these pagodas, the most venerable for their antiquity, as, for instance, those of Deogur and Tanjore, engraved among the accurate and beautiful designs of Mr. Hodges, are erected in the form of stupendous pyramids, resembling huge caverns, and admitting the light of heaven at one solitary door; they are, however, within artificially illuminated by an infinite number of lamps, suspended aloft, and kept continually burning. The similitude which the internal appearance of some of these more ancient Indian temples bears, in point of gloomy solemnity, to the original excavated pagoda, so forcibly struck Mandelsloe, on his visit to this country in 1638, that he expressly asserts, "they looked more like *caves* and recesses of unclean spirits, than places designed for the exercise of their religion."* As the Hindoos improved in architectural knowledge, the form of the pagoda gradually varied; the labours of art were exhausted, and the revenue of whole pro-

* See the Travels of J. Albert de Mandelsloe, translated by John Davies, and published at London in 1662.

vinces consumed, in adorning the temple of the Deity. In proof of this, may be adduced that passage which I have before quoted from the Ayeen Akbery, and which acquaints us that the *entire revenues of Orissa, for twelve years,* were expended in the erection of the TEMPLE TO THE SUN. The outside of the pagodas is in general covered all over with figures of Indian animals and deities, sculptured with great spirit and accuracy, while the lofty walls and cielings within are adorned with a rich profusion of gilding and paintings, representing the feats of the ancient Rajahs, the dreadful conflicts of the contending Dewtahs, and the various incarnations of the great tutelary god VEESHNU.

In regard to the great similitude which the earliest erected temples, both in India and Egypt, bore to ancient grove temples, it is strikingly evident and forcibly arrests attention in the arrangement of their columns, at regular and stated distances, forming vast aisles and gloomy avenues that extended all round the outside, as well as through the whole internal length of the edifice. It must be owned, however, that this style of building, with circular wings and long ranging avenues of columns, in the manner of the temples of Philaë and the serpent Cnuph, is more particularly

discernible in the temples of Egypt, where an infinity of pillars was necessary to support the ponderous stones, often thirty or forty feet in length, that formed the roofs of the stupendous structures of the Thebais. That similitude, likewise, irresistibly struck the beholder in the very form of those columns, of which the lofty taper shaft, as, in particular, those of Esnay, resembled the majestic stem of the cedar and palm, while their capitals expanded in a kind of foliage, representative of the compressed branches of the trees more usually deemed sacred. There is, in Pococke, a large plate of Egyptian columns, with their varied capitals: those capitals, in general, bulge out towards the centre, somewhat after the manner of the cushion that crowns the Indian column; and most of them are fluted or channeled in the manner of those in the Indian caverns and pagodas,

The Suryatic and Mithriac cavern, with its circular dome for the sculptured orbs, suspended aloft and imitative of those in the heavens, to revolve in, and the Zoroastrian worship of fire, conspired to give the Asiatic temples at once their lofty cupolas, and that pyramidal termination which they alternately assume, and which are often seen blended

together in different parts of the same edifice. Their astronomical and physical theology stamped upon other shrines of the Deity sometimes the OVAL form, that is, the form of the MUNDANE EGG, the image of that world which his power made and governs; and on others again, as those of Benares and Mattra, the form of the St. Andrew's cross, at once symbolical of the four elements, and allusive to the four quarters of the world. But I will not, in this place, anticipate the observations that will occur hereafter in more regular order, and with more strict propriety.

I shall first describe some of the more celebrated Indian temples; I shall then direct the eye of the reader to the massy fanes of the Thebais; and the reflections, resulting from the survey of those of either country, will be detailed in the dissertation alluded to. The reader will please to observe, that I by no means intend or presume to give a general history of Oriental architecture: I shall restrain my observations to that of India, Egypt, and the early periods of the Greek and Roman empires, and shall principally consider in the detail their astronomical and mythological speculations.

I shall commence my description of the

temples of India with observing, from Tavernier, by whose account I shall principally guide myself throughout this survey, and whose assertions, upon inquiry, I find to be *nearly* right, that the existing pagodas of the greatest antiquity and celebrity, above those already instanced in all India, are the pagodas of JAGGERNAUT, BENARES, MATTRA, and TRIPETTY, to which I shall add, from private authority, the name of one which that traveller did not visit, that of SERINGHAM. I adopt Tavernier's account in preference to any other for two reasons; first, because his narration, so far as it relates to objects which he actually visited, has ever been deemed, of all Indian travellers, the most genuine and authentic; and, secondly, because he travelled through India before those dreadful devastations commenced, which the execrable spirit of bigotry that actuated the mind of the Indian emperor, Aurengzeb, urged him to commit on the antient and hallowed shrines of India. This fierce Mohammedan, however renowned in the field of politics and war, tarnished all the glory obtained in that field by his intolerant zeal, and the remorseless fury with which he persecuted the benign religion and unoffending priests of Brahma. But for these unprovokad outrages, even the enor-

mous accumulation of crimes, and the torrent of kindred blood through which he ascended the throne of India, might have been somewhat veiled by the historian, and ascribed to the perfidious and often sanguinary intrigues of Eastern courts; but this conduct in Aurengzeb, so different from the mild and lenient Akber, and the immediate descendants of that considerate and beneficent monarch, covers his name with everlasting infamy, and forbids his biographer to palliate his glaring and reiterated atrocities.

It was about the middle of the last century, and before the august temple of Benares was polluted by those lofty Mahommedan minarets, which, Mr. Hastings says, make it, at a distance, so conspicuous and attractive an object, that Tavernier travelled through a country which his pen has described in so entertaining a manner. His particular description of the Indian pagodas commences at the eighteenth chapter of the first book of his travels in India; and, as they are not numerous, I shall attend him in his visits to all those of note which he surveyed; and if the modern traveller in India should not find the description exactly consonant to the image which his recollection presents to his view, he will be candid enough to consider, that, at this day, near a century and a half have elapsed,

and that the country in which they are or were situated, has been, during that space, the theatre of constant wars, and the scene of successive devastations. I shall not, however, confine myself to Tavernier: Mandelsloe, before-cited, travelled still earlier through that country; and both Bernier and Thevenot occasionally deserve respectful notice.

These amazing structures are generally erected near the banks of the Ganges, Kistna, or other sacred rivers, for the benefit of ablution in the purifying stream. Where no river flows near the foot of the pagoda, there is invariably, in the front of it, a large tank, or reservoir of water. These are, for the most part, of a quadrangular form, are lined with freestone or marble, have steps regularly descending from the margin to the bottom, and Mr. Crauford observed many between three and four hundred feet in breadth.* At the entrance of all the more considerable pagodas there is a portico, supported by rows of lofty columns, and ascended by a handsome flight of stone steps; sometimes, as in the instance of Tripetti,† to the number of more than a

* See Mr. Crauford's Sketches, vol. i. p. 106.

† See Voyage des Indes, tom. iii. p. 360. Edit. Rouen, 1713.

hundred. Under this portico, and in the courts that generally inclose the whole building, an innumerable multitude assembled at the rising of the sun, and, having bathed in the stream below, and, in conformity to an immemorial custom over all the East, having left their sandals on the border of the tank, impatiently await the unfolding of the gates by the ministering Brahmin. The gate of the pagoda universally fronts the east, to admit the ray of the solar orb, and opening presents to the view an edifice partitioned out, according to M. Thevenot in his account of Chitanagar, in the manner of the ancient cave-temples of Elora, having a central nave, or body; a gallery ranging on each side; and, at the farther end, a sanctuary, or chapel of the deity adored, surrounded by a stone ballustrade to keep off the populace.* The reader for the present must check his curiosity in regard to all the complicated modes of worship, and all the various ceremonial rites observed by the devotees in the Indian temples, till the ensuing chapter, which will fully describe

*. See Thevenot's Travels in India, p. 79. This author is asserted by some writers never to have been in India; but he certainly was, and the account of what he personally saw is detailed in these travels, which are equally entertaining and authentic.

them. Our more immediate business is with the temples themselves.

The Peninsula was the region of India last conquered by the Mohammedans; we may therefore expect to find in that region as well the genuine remains of the Indian religion as the unmixed features of the Indian architecture. In June, 1652, Tavernier commenced his journey from Masulipatam, (the Mesolia of Ptolemy,) on the Coromandel-coast, to Golconda, and the first pagoda of consequence which he remarked was that of BEZOARA, or BUZWARA, as Major Rennell writes the word. It is now only a fort on the Kistna river, but was then probably a considerable town; for, its temple is described by Tavernier as *une pagode fort grande*, not inclosed with walls, but erected upon fifty-two lofty colums, with statues of the Indian deities standing between the columns. Though the temple itself thus described, which seems to have been rather the sanctuary than the pagoda itself, a term which includes the whole structure, was without walls, in the form of the Monopteric buildings, mentioned by Vitruvius in his History of Architecture, yet it was situated in the midst of an oblong court, *plus longue que large*, encompassed with walls, round which ranged a

gallery raised upon sixty-six pillars in the manner of a cloister.*

It is rather unfortuate that this traveller, as well as others, have not been more particular in their descriptions of the form and ornaments of the columns which they saw in this country: many of which were undoubtedly erected before the Grecian orders of architecture were invented; and none of which, most assuredly, had those orders for their model. From repeated inquiries, made by me, I learn that they are in general of a fashion that bears some remote resemblance to the Doric; and, indeed, the weight and magnitude of the buildings they support seemed to require pillars approaching in strength to those of that primitive, simple, aud robust order. It is not impossible that the Greeks might derive from India their first notion of an order naturally dictated by a mode of building, widely different from the light, elegant, and airy style in which the Grecian edifices are generally erected. But on this subject, I shall hereafter trouble the reader with a disquisition of some extent. I omit, at present, his description of the monsters and demons *affreux*, as he calls them, with huge horns, and

* Voyage des Indes, tom. iii. p. 226. Edit. Rouen, 1713.

numerous legs and tails, sculptured in this pagoda, because it is my intention to notice these emblematical figures when, in the next chapter, I come to consider the worship paid in these pagodas. It is sufficient, at present, to remark that the Indians worship the Deity by symbols; while his power, extending through various nature, and his venerated attributes are represented by animals characteristic of them. Thus, for instance, his wisdom is symbolized by a circle of heads, his strength by the elephant, his glory by horns, imitative of the solar ray, his creative energy by the male of animals of a prolific kind, as the bull or goat, while the combinations of these animals, or parts of animals, were intended to designate his united power, wisdom, and glory. Degrading to the Divine Nature as these representations appear to us, and as they really are, they are no more than might be expected from a race so deeply involved in physics as the Indians are, and so totally unassisted by divine revelation to correct their perverted notions. In the neighbourhood of this pagoda was another, the name of which is not mentioned, situated upon a lofty hill. This pagoda Tavernier describes as quadrangular, with a high cupola crowning the summit. The hill itself is ascended by no

less than one hundred and ninety-three steps, every step a foot in height; *par un escalier de* 193 *marches, chacune d'un pied de haut.* I add the original that I may not appear to exaggerate.

Leaving these comparatively small edifices and this immediate route of our traveller, let us once more attend him to the grand temple of Jaggernaut, the most celebrated but undoubtedly not among the oldest shrines of India. I am aware that this assertion is directly contrary to the opinion which Mr. Sonnerat appears to favour, who tells us that, according to the annals of the country and the sacred books, the pagoda of Jaggernaut is incontestably the most ancient; and that, were its inward sanctuaries examined, in those sacred recesses would probably be discovered the most ancient and hallowed archives of the country. The calculations of the Brahmins, he adds, carry its antiquity as far back as the time of PARITCHITEN, first king of the coast of Orissa, who flourished at the commencement of the Cali age, and by this calculation it should be of the astonishing antiquity of 4800 years.* Neither from the appearance nor from the stile of this pagoda, which is not of a pyramidal form, but

* See Sonnerat's Voyages, chap. iv. p. 108.

is an immense circular fabric, does there arise any evidence of this stupendous antiquity. Jaggernaut is only another name for the great Indian god Mahadeo, who may be recognized by the vast bull, which, as related in a former page, juts out with an *eastern* aspect, from the centre of the building. The supposition of Major Rennell* is far more probable, that it was erected about the eleventh century, after the destruction of the superb temple of Sumnaut, in Guzzurat. The very name of the deity Naut, which signifies Creator, strongly corroborates this supposition; and there is an old tradition in the neighbourhood that the deity of this temple swam thither from a more westerly region. I must refer the reader to the first volume of these Antiquities, and to the Geographical Dissertation, under the soobah of Orissa, for an ample account, extracted by me from the Ayeen Akbery and Hamilton's Voyage, of the first establishment of this temple, of the deity adored in it, of the ceremonies and rites practised in it, of the frequent ablution of Jaggernaut, and the great multitude of Brahmins and devout pilgrims daily fed at his august temple. The Brahmin fable, relative to its erection, asserts that the spot on which

* See Memoir, p. 165, second edition.

it stands was peculiarly favoured by the Deity; and Major Rennell perhaps gives the true reason why it was so; viz. its remote situation from the scene of Mahmud's spreading conquests, and its being shut up from every approach, but on the side of the ocean, by impassable mountains and deep rivers. What Tavernier has recorded relative to this pagoda is inserted in the pages immediately succeeding in the volume just referred to; and to his description it is not necessary to add in this place any other particulars, than that it is the residence of the Arch-Brahmin of all India; that the image of Jaggernaut stands in the centre of the building upon a raised altar, encompassed with iron rails, under a very lofty dome; and that the sacred domains that belonged to the temple, the munificent donation of successive rajahs, once afforded pasturage to above 20,000 cows.

The Peninsula of India, however, affords two instances of buildings which are undoubtedly *among* the most ancient, if they are not absolutely the *most ancient*, of all the Indian temples. They are those of Deogur and Tanjore; and, as they have exercised the masterly and correct pencil of Mr. Hodges, in his celebrated designs of Indian buildings, we may depend upon the accuracy both of the engraving

and the accompanying concise description of them.

The pagodas of DEOGUR, according to that gentleman, shew the earliest stages of Hindoo architecture, being simply pyramids, by piling one massy stone upon another to a vast height. They are without any light whatever within, except what comes through a small door scarcely five feet high. In the CENTRE of the building is a dark chamber, lighted by one solitary lamp, where the rites of their religion are performed. The famous pagoda of TANJORE is not different from those of Deogur, but in its improved form and decorations *.

Let us now attend M. Tavernier to the region properly called Hindostan, and explore the great and highly venerated pagoda of Benares. This pagoda, he observes, derives a considerable portion of the distinguished celebrity which it enjoys from the superior sanctity of the city in which it stands, the ancient and renowned CASI, a city devoted from the earliest periods to Hindoo devotion and science! It is situated close to the shore of the Ganges; into which stream, according to our traveller, a regular flight of stone steps descends, leading

* See the account prefixed to the engravings of these temples in DESIGNS IN INDIA.

directly down from the gate of the pagoda. The body of the temple itself, he informs us,* is constructed in the form of a VAST CROSS, (that is, a St. Andrew's cross, allusive to the four elements,) with a very high cupola in the centre of the building, but somewhat PYRAMIDAL towards the summit; and at the extremity of every one of the four parts of the cross there is a tower, to which there is an ascent on the outside, with balconies at stated distances, affording delightful views of the city, the river, and adjacent country. With respect to the inside of this grand temple, he relates, that under the high dome in the middle, there stands an altar, in form of a table, eight feet in length, and six in breadth, covered sometimes with rich tapestry and sometimes with cloth of gold or silver, according to the greater or less solemnity of the festival, Upon this altar Tavernier saw several idols; but one in particular, six feet high, arrested his attention, the neck of which was splendidly decorated with a chain of precious stones, of which the priests have variety for different festivals, some of rubies, some of pearls, and others of emeralds. The head and neck of this idol were alone visible; all the rest of the body was covered with an

* Voyage de Tavernier, tom. iv. p. 149 Edit. à Rouen.

embroidered robe, spreading in ample folds upon the altar below. On the right side of the altar he observed a strange compound figure of massy gold, which he calls UNE CHIMERE, a CHIMÆRA, formed of the different parts of an elephant, a horse, and a mule, upon which, he was informed, that holy person used, when living, in his guardian care of mankind, to take long journeys; and I must add, that this circnmstance is another irrefragable proof, that many of the idols, adored in India, are DEIFIED MORTALS. He observed, likewise, in this pagoda, a certain idol of *black stone*, or the SOMMONACODOM, concerning which something more particular will occur hereafter. That execrable spirit of bigotry which actuated the mind of Aurengzeb, so different from that of the mild and tolerant Abker, prompted that remorseless persecutor of the Hindoo faith to pollute this venerable fabric, and insult the religion of Brahma in its ancient sanctuary. Upon the majestic ruins of this august pile, which was visited by Tamerlane before its pollution, he erected a grand mosque, with two very lofty Mohammedan minarets, which, Mr. Forster,* in his elegant but concise account of this city,

* Sketches of the Mythology and Customs of the Hindoos, by Mr. Forster, p. 4.

says, at the distance of eight miles, strongly attract the eye of the traveller who approaches Benares on the river from the east quarter, and which, from their elevated height, seem to look down with triumph and exultation on the humbled pride and degraded devotion of this once flourishing city and university.

There is another remarkable instance of the brutal conduct of Aurengzeb in regard to the pagoda of Ahmed-Abad, in Guzzurat, which therefore may not improperly be noticed here. It is called the pagoda of Santidas, the name of its founder, and is described by Tavernier as consisting of three courts, paved with marble, and surrounded with porticoes, supported by marble columns, into the third or inner court of which no person was permitted to enter with his sandals on. The inside roof and walls of this pagoda are adorned with Mosaic work and agates of various colours, and all the porticoes are crowded with female figures, finely sculptured in marble, I presume of Bhavani, the Indian Venus, or Nature in her prolific character personified, with her numerous attendants of nymphs and graces. This fine pagoda was afterwards defiled and converted into a Turkish mosque by Aurengzeb; and the history of the barbarities committed by the usurpers of India

scarcely records any greater outrage offered to the Hindoos than was committed by him in effecting his purpose. It is Thevenot, a later traveller in India, that furnishes me with the anecdote. Knowing the profound veneration of the Hindoos for the cow, he ordered one of those sacred animals to be slaughtered within its walls, which effectually precluded the Brahmins from ever again paying their adorations in a temple contaminated by such a dreadful and wanton act of atrocity.* His intolerant bigotry led him to commit still farther outrages. He waged war with the beautiful marble sculptures it contained; for, he ordered all those elegant statues to be disfigured, and smote off the nose of every figure in the edifice that alluded to the Hindoo mythology. There can scarcely be a doubt, from Thevenot's description of the great Mohammedan mosque, in this famous city, called Juma-Mesgid, that it was anciently a Hindoo temple.

It was my fixed intention in this Dissertation on the Indian architecture, to refrain from describing any temples, however grand and stupendous, as many of the Mohammedan mosques, erected in India, are, that were not

* See Thevenot's Indian Travels, p. 10. Eng. fol. edit. 1687.

strictly Hindoo; but, as the style of building of the JUMA-MESGID, or Friday's Mosque, so called from the great resort of all ranks of Mohammedans thither on that day, evidently proves the architecture to be genuine Indian, I shall, in this instance alone, deviate from my general rule. I shall adhere to Thevenot's account, which is more ample than Tavernier's.

This vast pile, of which the ingenious Mr. Forbes has favoured me with the sight of a beautiful drawing, taken on the spot, by his own correct pencil, is erected in a quadrangular fashion, but not exactly square; for it is in length 140 paces, and in breadth 120, which is entirely consonant to the observation of Mr. Crauford, that the Hindoos never erect any building precisely square, though their deviation from that line of measurement is very trifling, and, in their large buildings, scarcely discernible. Round this wall, on the inside, as is usual in India, and as may be seen in my engraving of the large pagoda in the former volume, runs a vaulted gallery, the roof of which is supported by four-and-thirty pilasters. The temple itself is elevated upon forty-four pillars, ranging two and two in regular order through the building, and the pavement is of marble. Twelve beautiful domes, of different dimensions,

meet the eye of the spectator on his approach to the temple. In the middle of the front of it are three great arches; at the sides are two large square gates that open into it; and each gate is beautified with pilasters, but without any particular order of architecture. The high steeples, or minarets, on the top of each gate, from which, he says, the beadles of the mosque call the people to prayers, are doubtless of Mohammedan construction.

While on this western side of India, the reader will perhaps readily pardon an excursion to Patten-Sumnaut, near the coast, where once flourished the most superb temple in all Hindostan, but whose inmost sanctuary was polluted, and whose immense accumulated wealth was plundered, by the desolating tyrant Mahmud of Gazna, in his invasion of this part of India, about the year 1000 of our æra. The temple of SUMNAUT, a deity very nearly related, I conceive, to JAGGERNAUT of Orissa, or rather, as I shall hereafter endeavour, from the similarity of appellation and the co-incidence of various other circumstances to evince, the very identical divinity venerated on that coast, was, previously to the irruption of the Gaznavide sultans, the most celebrated resort of devotees in this ever most populous and best cultivated

region of Hindostan. Indeed the idol, adored in this grand temple, gave his name, not only to the city, but to a very extensive tract of country around it; since, according to the Ayeen Akbery,* one of the grand divisions of the province of Guzerat, is called by his name. He seems, indeed, like Jaggernaut, in later times, to have had pre-eminence above all other idols that were worshipped throughout the whole country: for if Ferishtah may be credited, the different rajahs had bestowed two thousand villages, with their territories, for the support of the establishment of this temple, in which two thousand priests constantly officiated. Of the temple itself, the most extravagant relations are given by the Persian and Arabian authors, who wrote the life of Mahmud and his descendants; authors from whose valuable works Ferishtah probably drew the materials of his Indian History: and which authors, after great expence and toil of research, are now, for the most part, in my possession. From these authentic sources, therefore, compared with the Ayeen Akbery and other Indian productions, printed and manuscript, to which the patrons and friends of this work have granted me access, I hope to gratify my readers with a more valuable and original

* Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 81.

work than I could first hope to complete; a work, which, in the large scale at present proposed, cannot fail of being more generally interesting, since it will embrace much of the history of the ancient world, and record many of the most illustrious deeds transacted on the great theatre of Asia; too illustrious, alas! if the daring but successful outrages of ferocious barbarians may be called illustrious, and the oppression and plunder of the mildest and most benevolent people on earth dignified by the name of valour.

The lofty roof of Sumnaut was supported by fifty-six pillars overlaid with plates of gold, and incrusted at intervals with rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones. One pendant lamp alone illumined the spacious fabric, whose light reflected back from innumerable jewels, spread a strong and refulgent lustre throughout the whole temple. In the midst stood Sumnaut himself, an idol composed of one entire stone, fifty cubits in height, forty-seven of which were buried in the ground; and, on that spot, according to the Brahmins, he had been worshipped between four and five thousand years, a period beyond which, it is remarkable, they never venture to ascend; for, it is a period at which their Cali, or present age, commences: it is, in

short, the period of that flood, beyond which, Mr. Bryant judiciously observes, human records *cannot* ascend. His image was washed every morning and evening with fresh water, brought from the Ganges, at the distance of twelve hundred miles. Around the dome were dispersed some thousands of images in gold and silver, of various shapes and dimensions, so that on this spot, as in a grand pantheon, seemed to be assembled all the deities venerated in Hindostan. As it may gratify the reader to be informed of the fate of this beautiful and costly shrine, and of the sentiments raised by the prospect of it in the breast of a savage and avaricious usurper, I shall present him with the relation of that event as it stands in the proposed history.

Mahmud being informed of the riches collected at Sumnaut, as well as of the tremendous menace of the idol, if he approached that hallowed shrine, was determined to put the power of the god to instant trial. Leaving Gazna with an immense army, and advancing by the way of Multan and Ajmere, through two terrible deserts, where nothing but the most prudent exertions saved that army from being annihilated by famine, he arrived, without opposition, before the walls of Sumnaut. On the high battle-

ments of the temple were assembled an innumerable multitude in arms, when a herald approaching denounced the vengeance of the god, and informed the besiegers that their idol, Summaut, had drawn them together on that spot, that he might blast them in a moment, and avenge, by one dreadful and general ruin, the destruction of the gods of Hindostan. In spite of these awful imprecations, Mahmud commenced an immediate and vigorous assault, and drove the defendants from the walls, which the besiegers, by scaling ladders, instantly mounted, exclaiming aloud, "Allah Akbar." The Hindoos, who had retreated into the temple, and prostrated themselves before their idol, in devout expecation of seeing the enemy discomfited by the signal and instantaneous vengeance of heaven, finding their expectations vain, made a desperate effort for the preservation of the place. Rushing in a body on the assailants, they repulsed them with great slaughter; and, as fast as fresh forces ascended the walls, pushed them headlong down with their spears. This advantage they maintained for two days, fighting like men who had devoted themselves to that death, which their belief in the Metempsychosis assured them was only a passage to felicity and glory. At the end of

this period a vast army of idolators coming to their relief, drew the attention of Mahmud from the siege to his own more immediate safety. Leaving, therefore, a body of troops to amuse the besieged, he took a more favourable station, and prepared to engage the advancing enemy. These were led to battle by Rajah Byram Deo, from whose family the territory of Deo received its name, and other considerable rajahs, under the certain persuasion that the cause for which they were to fight would insure victory to their arms. Accordingly, they fought with a heroism proportionate to their superstition; and, before victory declared for Mahmud, five thousand Hindoos lay slaughtered on the field. The garrison of Sumnaut, after this defeat, giving up all for lost, issued out of a gate that looked towards the ocean, and embarked in boats to the number of four thousand, with an intent to proceed to the island of Serandib or Ceylon; but, information of their flight having been given to the sultan, he seized all the boats that remained in the harbour, and sent after them a select body of his best troops, who, capturing some and sinking others, permitted few of the miserable fugitives to escape.

After placing a large body of guards at the gates and round the walls, Mahmud entered the

city, and approaching the temple was struck with the majestic grandeur of that ancient structure; but when he entered in and saw the inestimable riches it contained, he was filled with astonishment, mingled with delight. In the fury of Mohammedan zeal, he smote off the nose of the idol with a mace which he carried, and ordered the image to be disfigured and broke to pieces. While they were proceeding to obey his command, a croud of Brahmins, frantic at this treatment of their idol, petitioned his omras to interfere, and offered some crores in gold if he would forbear farther to violate the image of their deity. They urged, that the demolition of the idol would not remove idolatry from the walls of Sumnaut, but that such a sum of money, given among believers, would be an action truly meritorious. The sultan acknowledged the truth of their remark, but declared that he never would become that base character, which a coincidence with their petition would render him, a seller of idols. The persons appointed, therefore, proceeded in their work; and, having mutilated the superior part, broke in pieces the body of the idol, which had been made hollow, and contained an infinite variety of diamonds, rubies, and pearls, of a water so pure, and of a magnitude so uncom-

mon, that the beholders were filled with surprize and admiration. This unexpected treasure, with all the other spoil, taken in the temple and city of Sumnaut, were immediately secured and sent to Gazna; while fragments of the demolished idol were distributed to the several mosques of Mecca, Medina, and Gazna, to be thrown at the threshold of their gates, and trampled upon by devout and zealous Mussulmen.

If the reader should now choose to ascend towards the city of Naugracut, in the great range of mountains so called, whither few Europeans, besides John Albert de Mandelslo, have penetrated, he may there contemplate the ruins of what that writer, who visited the place in 1638,, denominates "a superb and sumptuous pagoda, the floor whereof is covered with plates of gold, and in which is the effigies of an animal, or rather monster, to whom the numerous devotees sacrifice their tongues."* Mandelslo calls it the idol MATTA; but Abul Fazil, who had probably visited the place in one of his journeys, with Akber, to Cashmere, expressly says, it was the consort, that is, the active power, of Mahadeo, the destroying god, to whom these sanguinary sacrifices, so much in

* Mandelslo's Travels, p. 21.

unison with his character, were made. The reader may likewise view the remains of the hallowed college of Tanassar, which Mr. Finch visited so early as the year nine of the seventeenth century, the fame of whose learning, and the wealth of whose august pagodas, was spread over all India.* Indeed, according to the Arabian writers, who will hereafter be cited at large by me, this place was the Mecca of this part of Hindostan, and its solid idols of massy silver made no small part of the booty acquired in Mahmud's sixth irruption into India. Many other noble pagodas adorned these higher regions of Hindostan, whose accumulated treasures became the property of those sacrilegious Arabian and Persian invaders, who, under the pretence of propagating religion, violated every principle of morality, and spread havoc and desolation through regions once the loveliest and the happiest upon earth.

Tanassar was, according to the Ayeen Akbery, the northern, and Mattra the southern, limit of the domains of the old rajahs of Delhi, previous to the subversion of their power by these merciless marauders. To the latter city, once rich and beautiful, but now decayed and ruined, the scene of the exploits of the amiable

* See Mr. Finch's Travels in Harris's Voyages, vol. i. p. 88.

Creeshna, the course of the Jumnah, that washes Delhi, will immediately lead us. Let us approach, with becoming reverence, the superb temple of the mildest and most benevolent of all the Hindoo deities.

Mattra, the Methora of Pliny, is situated about eighteen miles from Agra, on the direct road to Delhi, and is particularly celebrated for having been the birth-place of Creeshna, who is esteemed, in India, not so much an incarnation of the divine Veeshnu as the Deity himself in a human form. The history of this personage is among the most curious of all that occur in Indian mythology. The Sanscreet narrative of his extraordinary feats, in some points, approaches so near to the Scriptural account of our Saviour, as to have afforded real ground for Sir W. Jones to suppose the Brahmins had, in the early ages of Christianity, seen or heard recited to them some of the spurious gospels which in those ages so numerously abounded, and had ingrafted the wildest parts of them upon the old fable of this Indian Apollo.* The birth of this divine infant was predicted, and a reigning tyrant of India, by name CANSA, learning from the prediction that he should be destroyed by this wonderful child, ordered all

* See Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 262—273.

the male-children, born at that period, to be slain; but Creeshna was preserved by biting the breast, instead of sucking the poisoned nipple, of the nurse commissioned to destroy him. From fear of this tyrant, he was fostered in MATHURA by an honest herdsman, and passed his innocent hours in rural diversions at his foster-father's farm. Repeated miracles, however, soon discovered his celestial origin. He preached to the Brahmins the doctrines of meekness and benevolence; he even condescended to wash their feet as a proof of his own meekness; and he raised the dead by descending for that purpose to the lowest region. He acted not always, indeed, in the capacity of a prince or herald of peace, for he was a mighty warrior; but his amazing powers were principally exerted to save and to defend. Even the great war of the Mahabbarat, which he fomented, was a JUST WAR, undertaken against invaders and tyrants, whom he triumphantly overthrew, and then returned to his seat in VAICONTHA, the heavenly region.

The pagoda sacred to this Indian deity, is not less stupendous than his history and his actions. According to Tavernier, it is one of the most sumptuous edifices in all India, constructed of the same beautiful red stone, or marble, with

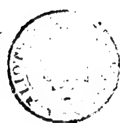
which, I before observed, the castle of Agra and the walls of Delhi are built,* and standing upon a vast octagonal platform, overlaid with hewn stone. Extensive, however, as is this temple, it does not occupy above half the platform: the remaining half serves as a grand piazza in front of it. The platform itself is ascended by two flights of stone steps, sixteen in number, of which, the principal leads up to the grand portal of the pagoda, supported by pillars richly decorated with the usual sculptures. The pagoda is constructed likewise in the form of a cross, of which each wing is equal in extent, and a similar dome to that at Benares rises to a vast height in the centre, with an addition of two others, somewhat smaller, on each side. The elevation and grandeur of the whole fabric may easily be conceived from the assertion of the same traveller, that, though situated in a bottom, it is distinctly visible at the distance of five or six leagues. In this pagoda, the SANCTUARY is partitioned off by a close balustrade of pillars, within which none but the Brahmins are allowed to enter. A bribe to those Brahmins, however, introduced our curious traveller into this recess, and who there

* See the description of Agra in the Geographical Dissertation, vol. i. p. 72.

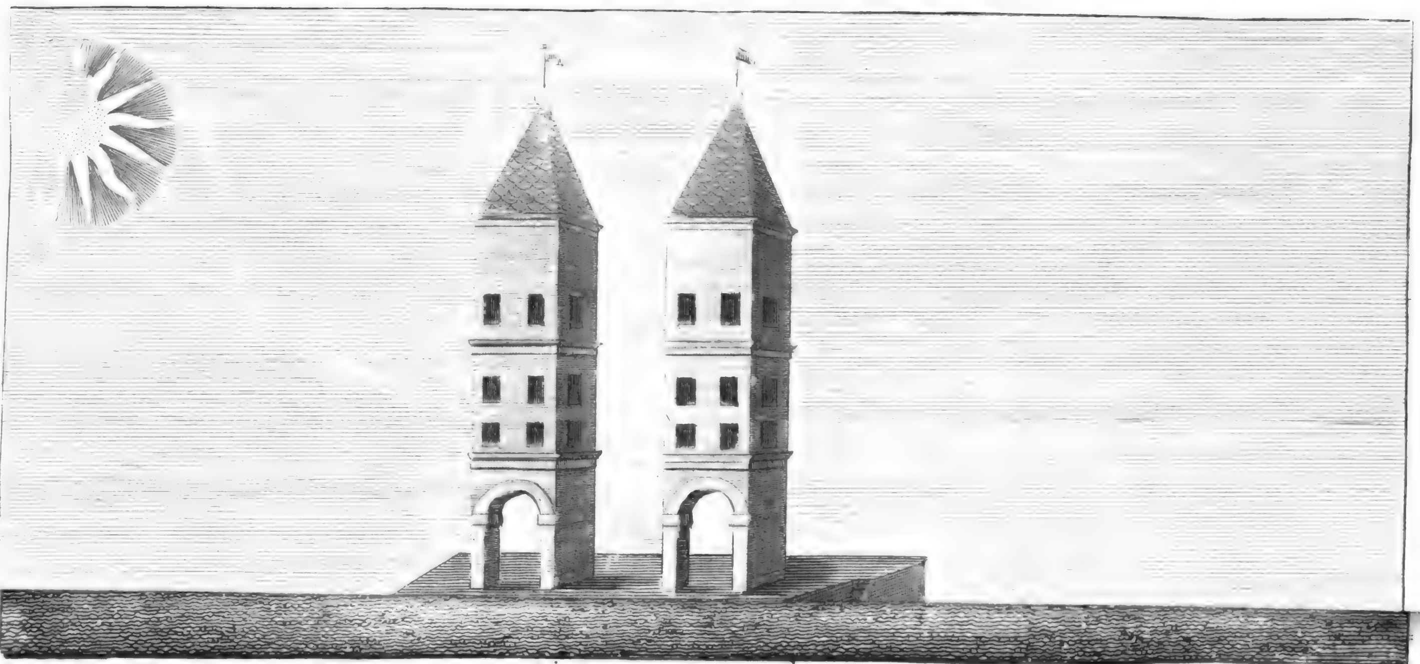
beheld a great square altar, sixteen feet in height, covered with gold and silver brocade, on which stood the great idol, which, he says, they call RAM RAM. RAM, however, he mentions in another place as the general appellation for an idol deity; and the idol, here worshipped, is, doubtless, Veeshnu, under the form of Creeshna. It should not be forgotten, however, that RAMA was the elder brother of Creeshna. The head of the idol, which appeared to be of black marble, was alone visible, with two great rubies in the place of eyes. All the rest of the body, from the shoulder to the feet, was concealed beneath a robe of purple velvet. He noticed also two small idols, one on each side of the greater, and the superb carriage in which, on high festivals, the god is carried about in procession. Long before the period of Tavernier's visit to Mattra, the veneration of the Hindoos for this august pagoda had declined, and the devotion, so fervently paid at its hallowed shrine in ancient time, was almost totally neglected. The reason which he assigns for this general neglect of the rites, due to the benevolent CREESHNA, is, that the Jumnah, which formerly flowed close by its foot, had retired to the distance of half a league from it, and that distance was inconvenient for the ablution of

the numerous pilgrims who formerly flocked to it; so inconvenient, that, before they could reach the pagoda, some fresh defilement had taken place, and it became necessary to repeat the ablution.

The pagoda of Tripetty is situated upon the top of a high mountain in the dominions of the nabob of Arcot, about forty miles north-east of that capital; and, as well for its extent as for the various accommodations of lodgings for the numerous Brahmins who officiate in it, has the appearance of a city rather than of a temple. To this hill, Tavernier says, there is a circular ascent every way of hewn stone; the least of the stones, forming that ascent, being ten feet long and three broad; and the hill itself, Mr. Cambridge adds, is considered in so sacred a light, that none but Hindoos are ever suffered to ascend it. According to this latter gentleman's information, which I presume to be authentic, Tripetti is holden by the Hindoos of the Peninsula in the same veneration as Mecca is by the Mohammedans, and there is annually, in September, a festival celebrated at this place, to which an immense crowd of pilgrims, loaded with presents for the idol, resort, to the great emolument of the priests and the great increase of the revenues of the nabob.



A Mexican temple to the Sun and Moon



This Mexican Shrine is very remarkable, because erected after the manner of the pyramidal temple of Belus. at Babylon, and evidently proves in what country the Americans first caught the SABIAN SUPERSTITION

Prattent sc.

Tavernier describes the principal statue as resembling VENUS, and therefore the goddess here adored is, in all probability, BHAVANI, whom I have before observed to be the Indian Venus.

However venerable these four pagodas for their sanctity and antiquity, they are all exceeded, in point of magnificence, at least, by that of SERINGHAM, which is situated upon an island to which it gives its name, and is itself formed by two branches of the great river Cauveri. The pagoda of SERINGHAM stands in the dominions of the king of Tanjore, in the neighbourhood of Tritchinopoly, and is composed, according to Mr. Orme, of "seven square inclosures, one within the other, the walls of which are twenty-five feet high and four thick. The inclosures are 350 feet distant from one another, and each has four large gates, with a high tower; which are placed, one in the middle of each side of the inclosure, and opposite to the FOUR CARDINAL POINTS." The outward wall is near four miles in circumference, and its gate-way to the south is ornamented with pillars, several of which are single stones, thirty-three feet long, and nearly five feet in diameter; while those, which form the roof, are still larger: in the inmost inclosures are the chapels. "Here, (continues this elegant

historian,) as in all the other great pagodas of India, the Brahmins live in a subordination which knows no resistance, and slumber in a voluptuousness that knows no wants; here, sensible of the happiness of their condition, they quit not the silence of their retreats to mingle in the tumults of the state; nor point the brand, flaming from the altar, against the authority of the sovereign, or the tranquillity of the government."* All the gate-ways are crowded with emblematical figures of their various divinities. No Europeans are admitted into the last square, containing the sanctuary of the supreme Veeshnu, and few have gone farther than the third. In the war between the French and English in the Carnatic, this voluptuous slumber of the Brahmins was frequently interrupted; for, the pagoda, being a place of considerable strength, was alternately taken possession of by the contending armies. On the first attempt to penetrate within the sacred inclosure, a venerable Brahmin, struck with horror at the thought of having a temple, so profoundly hallowed for ages, polluted by the profane footsteps of Europeans, took his station on the top of the grand gate-way of the outermost court, and conjured the invaders to desist from their impious enter-

* Orme's History of Hindostan, second edition, vol. i. p. 178.

prize. Finding all his expostulations ineffectual, rather than be the agonizing spectator of its profanation, he, in a transport of rage, threw himself upon the pavement below, and dashed out his brains. This circumstance cannot fail of bringing to the reader's mind the fine ode of Gray, intitled "The Bard," and the similar catastrophe of the hoary prophet.

The artful policy of princes, and the superstitious terrors of the vulgar, operating together, had contributed to enrich many of the pagodas of India with revenues in money and territory equal to that of many sovereigns. The sacred and accumulated treasures of ages have, in modern periods, been dissipated by the sacrilegious violence of Mohammedan and European plunderers; and even of their territories much has been curtailed. What an ample provision indeed had been made in these hallowed retreats for the voluptuous repose, in which, Mr. Orme has just informed us, the luxurious priests of Brahma slumbered, as well as to what an astonishing number their body in the principal pagodas formerly amounted, will be evident to the reader, who will take the trouble of turning to the pages of that entertaining traveller and faithful narrator Captain Hamilton, or of the above-cited historian. The former assures us,

that the temple of Jaggernaut is visited by an incredible number of pilgrims from the most distant regions of India, that the Mohammedan prince of the country formerly exacted a tax of the value of half-a-crown per head on every pilgrim who came to worship at that pagoda; which, in the annual average, amounted to 750,000*l.* and that five CANDIES of provision were daily dressed for the use of the priests and pilgrims, each candy containing 1600lb. weight.*

This account of Mr. Hamilton is confirmed, in almost similar words, by Tavernier, who, speaking of Jaggernaut, observes, "Les revenus de cette grand pagode sont suffisans pour donner tous les jours à manger à quinze au vingt mille pelerins, comme il s'y en trouve souvent un pareil nombre."† Mr. Orme acquaints us that pilgrims come from all parts of the Peninsula to worship at that of Seringham, but none without an offering of money; that a large part of the revenue of the island is allotted for the maintenance of the Brahmins who inhabit it; and that these, with their families, formerly composed a multitude

* Hamilton's Voyage to the East Indies, vol. i. p. 386. The first edition of this book was printed in Scotland; but I cite throughout that of London, 1744.

† Voyage de Tavernier, tom. iv. p. 144.

not less in number than 40,000 souls, maintained without labour by the liberality of superstition.*

The disproportioned figures of most of the idols, adored in these superb fabrics, are by no means in unison with the prevailing symmetry that reigns in their construction ; though it must be confessed, that the ponderous ornaments of gold and jewels, with which they are decorated, are perfectly so with the sumptuousness and magnificence that distinguish them. Those idols are in general formed of every monstrous shape which imagination can conceive, being, for the most part, half human and half savage. Some appear formidably terrific with numerous heads and arms, the rude expressive symbols of super-human wisdom and of gigantic power ; others appear with large horns branching from their heads : and others again with huge tusks protruded from their extended mouths. In short, as Master Purchase has observed, "they are very ill-favoured ; their mouths are monstrous, their ears gilded and full of jewels, their teeth and eyes of gold, silver, or glass, and coloured black with the lamps that burn continually before them." † A

* Orme's History of Hindostan, vol. i. p. 178.

† See Purchase's Pilgrimage, vol. i. p. 579, edit. 1679.

profusion of consecrated hieroglyphic animals appears sculptured all over the crowded walls. The BULL, so peculiarly sacred to OSIRIS, at Memphis, as indeed, he was to SEEVA, THE GOD WITH THE CRESCENT, at Benares, the RAM sacred to JUPITER, and the GOAT to PAN, are seen together in the same groupe with the ape, the rhinoceros, and the elephant: and EGYPT seems to have blended her sacred animals with those which are considered as in a more peculiar manner belonging to INDIA.

SECTION II.

Preliminary Observations to the comparative Survey of the Temples of Egypt, comprehending an extensive Disquisition relative to the Period in which the Superstitions, more peculiarly appropriate to EGYPT, *were transported into* INDIA.—*Probable to have been at that Crisis when the Egyptian Priests were driven from their Country by the cruel Ravages of* CAMBYSES. — *The Opinions of* KIRCHER *and* KÆMPFER *on this Subject, greatly corroborated by the Reflections of Sir* W. JONES, *in the Asiatic Researches, on the Subject of the Indian Deity* BOODH, *or* BUDDHA; *and on the great Resemblance subsisting both in the Name and the worship of the Egyptian* ISIS *and* OSIRIS *and the Indian* ESWARA *and* ISA. —*Mr.* CHAMBERS's *Account of the Ruins of Mavalipuram, of the* SOMMONACODOM, *or Stone-Deity of the* SIAMESE, *and of the Super-*

stition of BOODH.—*Additional Evidence of an early and familiar Intercourse subsisting between the* EGYPTIANS *and* INDIANS, *adduced.*—*First, in their mutual Veneration of the sacred* LOTOS.—*Secondly, in their early Cultivation of the* SUGAR-CANE.—*Thirdly, in their ancient and once universal Diet having consisted of* VEGETABLES.—*Fourthly, in their mutually possessing a* SACRED SACERDOTAL LANGUAGE, *called in India the* DEVANAGARI.—*Fifthly, in the Division of the People into* TRIBES *or* CASTS.—*Sixthly, in the numerous* ABLUTIONS *practised by both People.*—*And, finally, in their universal Reverence of the* COW *and the* SERPENT.—*The* PYRAMIDS, *the* COLOSSAL STATUES, *and the* TEMPLES, *of* EGYPT, *together with their symbolical Decorations, are now at large considered in a new and mythological Point of View, and the Analogy which they bear to the ancient Mythriac Superstitions of the Greater Asia are pointed out.*

IMPRESSED with ideas tolerably correct of the unsullied purity of the *genuine* laws and of the uniform simplicity of the *original* mode of

worship established by the first great legislator of Hindostan, and not ignorant, at the same time, of the awful sanction by which the natives were bound, through the wise policy of the legislator, to the strict observance of both, many zealous admirers of the celebrated institution of Indian jurisprudence and theology have been filled with astonishment at the rapid increase of idol-deities, and especially of Egyptian deities, in that country. It is evident from every review of the ancient history of the two countries, that in the most early ages, a very familiar intercourse subsisted between India and Egypt. Upon evidence, that appears neither irrational, nor unsupported by collateral proof, we have seen that some authors of credit have considered the Indians as descended from Rama, the grandson of HAM, the parent of idolatry. However strong that evidence, the more generally prevalent opinion seems to be that the Indians are of the nobler and more devout line of SHEM. If we consider them in the latter point of view, as the progeny of that holy patriarch, one of the most probable solutions of this deviation, in his descendants, from their primeval simplicity of worship that has been offered, is to be found in the learned Athanasius Kircher,* who has made

* Kircher. Chin. Illustrat. part iii. p. 151. edit. Amst. 1667.

the theologic systems of the various Oriental nations, and, in particular, the hieroglyphic emblems of deity adored in Egypt, the subject of his minute researches. The frantic outrages committed by Cambyses, after his conquest of Egypt, his murder of APIS, their most venerated deity, the wanton cruelties which he inflicted upon his priests, and the consequent burning of those lofty and unrivalled edifices, the remains of which, at this day, constitute the proudest glory of that desolated country, are related at large in the third book of Herodotus. It seems to have been the intention of that monarch at once to extinguish the Egyptian religion and to extirpate the order of the priesthood; nor can we wonder that the real madness, which succeeded to the temporary phrenzy that dictated those outrages, was imputed by the same sacred order to the immediate vengeance of heaven for the unheard-of sacrilege. From the lacerating scourge and the destroying sword of Cambyses, Kircher represents the Egyptian priests as flying with horror, and taking up their residence in all the neighbouring countries of Asia, whose inhabitants would afford them shelter. These holy and persecuted men, throughout the regions which received them, are said to have propagated the supersti-

tions of Egypt, and both India, Scythia, and China, became in time polluted with the multiform idolatry, which, in so remarkable a manner, prevailed on the banks of the Nile. If this explication of the introduction into India of so many idols peculiar to Egypt, be allowed to have any weight, it will also account for various striking features of resemblance in the idolatrous ceremonies common to these countries, as well as the monstrous forms of many of the idols adored with equal reverence in the pagodas of China and Hindostan; and it will partly explain the reason of that very particular and universal veneration in which the two sacred animals of Egypt, the Cow and the SERPENT, are holden.

To the authority of Kircher may be added that of a still greater writer, who, to the various learning obtained from books united the less fallible evidence arising from ocular investigation. The profound Kæmpfer,* in his history of Japan, asserts his belief that the great Indian saint, BUDHA SAKIA, was a priest of Memphis, where the god APIS was particularly adored, who about that period fled into India, and together with many other Egyptian superstitions, introduced the worship of Apis, before unknown to the natives. Sir W. Jones seems,

* See Kæmpfer's Hist. Japan, vol. i. p. 38, edit. 1728.

in some degree, to confirm the opinion of both these respectable authors,* when he says that Boodh was undoubtedly the Wod or Oden of the Scandinavians; and, under the softer name of Fo, was, in succeeding ages, honoured with adoration by the Chinese. The only objection to a perfect coincidence in sentiment between these Oriental critics seems to lie in the point of chronology; for, the last, in the same page with the above assertion, fixes the appearance of Boodh, or the ninth great incarnation of Veeshnu, in the year one thousand and fourteen before Christ, whereas the invasion of Egypt, by Cambyses, took place, according to Archbishop Usher, in the year 525 before the Christian æra.

In corroboration of the conjecture, that a considerable part of the religious rites, at this day observed in Hindostan, constituted formerly the established religion of Egypt, may be adduced the sentiments of the learned personage just cited, and inserted in a preceding page of the Asiatic researches. Sir W. Jones, with more than usual confidence, asserts his belief, that the "Eswara and Isa of the Hindoos are the Isis and Osiris of the Egyptians;" adding, that he is persuaded we shall, in time, discover

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 425.

in India all the learning of the Egyptians, without decyphering their hieroglyphics.* He subjoins, that the bull of Eswara is most probably Apis, the Egyptian divinity; and that, if the veneration shewn, both in Tibet and India, to so amiable and useful a quadruped as the cow has not some affinity with the religion of Egypt and the idolatry of Israel, we must at least allow that circumstances have wonderfully coincided.

With respect to the colonies that are supposed to have come from Egypt to India, this is the result of Sir William's inquiries: he informs us that Misr, the native appellation for Egypt, is a name familiar in India, both as a title of honour and as an appellative; that Tirhoot, a territory in North Bahar, was the country, asserted, by an aged and learned Brahmin, to be that in which such colony settled; that even the word Nilus may be safely derived from the Sanscreet word Nila, or *blue*, since the Nile is expressly called, by Dyonisius, an azure stream; that he is strongly of opinion that Egyptian priests have actually come from the Nile to the Ganga and Yamana, (Jumna,) which the Brahmins most assuredly would never have left; that, whether they might come there to instruct or to be instructed, he could not decide,

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 253.

but more probably for the latter cause, from the self-sufficient character of the Brahmins; and, that they might visit the SARMANES of India, as the sages of Greece visited them, rather to acquire than to impart knowledge.

M. Anquetil, in 1760, visited a pagoda of most remote antiquity on the coast of Malabar; and, advancing into it, perceived, in a corner, a little stone statue, about a foot long, representing an ox, ill-shaped, lying down, with a bell about his neck, and yet reeking with the oil of the sacrifices. He proposed to his servant who was a Parsé, to take it away with him, but that servant refused. Another of his attendants, a good Mussulman, and less scrupulous, took it away, and put it into his palankeen. The author adds, that he retired happy in an opportunity of carrying to Europe a deity, taken out of one of the most celebrated Indian pagodas. Can we wonder, after this confession, that the Brahmins are jealous of Europeans approaching the sanctuaries of their religion.

It seems to be the opinion of Mr. Chambers, and that opinion is corroborated by very strong testimony from other writers, cited by that gentleman in the Asiatic Researches,* where he treats of some grand remains of ancient Hindoo

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 145.

temples and sculptures, like those of Salsette and Elephanta, cut out of the solid rock, on the Coromandel coast, that there anciently prevailed in India, or at least in the Peninsula, a system of religion, very different from that inculcated in the Vedas, and, in some respects, totally inconsistent with the principles and practice of the present Brahmins. This religion, he asserts, still flourishes in the farther Peninsula, particularly among the Siamese, between whom and the inhabitants of the Decan and Ceylone, it is evident, from his dissertation, that a considerable intercourse, in very remote periods, has subsisted. Mr. Chambers supposes this religion to be the worship of the God BOODH above-mentioned, whose votaries, Mr. Knox observes, took particular pride in erecting to his honour temples and high monuments, "as if they had been born solely to hew rocks and great stones, and lay them up in heaps."* Their kings, he adds, are now happy spirits, having merited heaven by those stupendous labours. In the treatise referred to above, among other evidences of the probability of his supposition, Mr. Chambers has inserted a passage from M.

* See Knox's curious, and I believe, authentic, historical account of the island of Ceylone; published at London, 1681.

Gentil, who remarked, in the neighbourhood of Verapatnam, a statue of granite, very hard and beautiful, probably of many thousand weight, but half sunk in the deep sand, and standing, as it were, abandoned in the midst of that extensive plain. He observed, "that it exactly resembled THE SOMMONACODOM, or principal stone deity of the Siamese, in the form of its head, in its features, and in the position of its arms; but that it bore no similitude to the present idols of the Hindoos; and, upon enquiry of the Tamulians, he was constantly informed, that it *was* the God BOODH, who was now no longer regarded, since the Brahmins had made themselves masters of the people's faith." The idol-deity, represented by the Sommonacodom, was, among the Siamese, what Confucius was among the Chinese. His history and the rites of his religion are involved in the deepest gloom of mythology. According to the Balic books, he was born of a father and mother who had reigned in Ceylone, and seems himself to have extended his wide jurisdiction, both as a king and as a prophet, not only over that island, but over a great part of the TWO PENINSULAS. He was endowed with the most extraordinary strength and activity of body, to overthrow dæmons and giants in combat; and, by severe mortification and

intense piety, he had arrived at the knowledge of the *past*, *present*, and *future*. It is remarkable, however, that the Brahmins, while they rejected the religious worship of BOODH, which, at present, flourishes in Ceylone and Siam, retained one peculiar and agreeable appendage of that religion: "the women, or female slaves, of the idol." These, as we have before observed, "are public women, devoted in infancy to this profession by their parents, in gratitude for some favour obtained from the propitious idol." Those, who wish for a farther account of the doctrines and ceremonious rites of BOODH, may be gratified by reading the dissertation alluded to in the Asiatic Researches; the account of Mr. Loubere,* envoy at Siam, in 1687; and Mr. Knox's curious and authentic history of Ceylone.

But not merely in many of the rites practised, and the images venerated among the Indians; have the strongest features of resemblance between that nation and the Egyptians been discovered; it seems apparent, in the very structure of their most ancient and most hallowed pagodas. The temples of Egypt, indeed, are in general

* A considerable extract, from this account of LOUBERE and the Jesuits, is inserted in Harris's Voyages, vol. ii. p. 465.

of a height and magnitude still more astonishing; but in their figure, design, and embellishments, they are strikingly similar. If the reader will consult the pages of the celebrated Egyptian travellers of the seventeenth century, attentively consider their various relations, and accurately inspect the engravings, exhibited by those travellers, of its magnificent but mouldering shrines, he will find this assertion verified in a manner equally pointed and surprising.

In Mr. Gough's short view of the ancient monuments of India, which is accompanied with neat etchings of the drawings of Niebuhr, whose voluminous and expensive publications few have leisure to read or inclination to purchase, this prevailing correspondency is represented in a very forcible point of view. "Let us for a moment," says the ingenious writer, "form a comparison between these Indian buildings and those of Egypt, on which so much more description and drawing have been bestowed. Let us turn our eyes to the superb temples of Luxor and Medinet-Habou, Esnay, and Edfy, and the palace of Memnon, described by Pococke and Norden, and we shall discover a striking resemblance even in the pillars, the ornaments, and the reliefs. The temple of the serpent Cnuphis, in an island, called also

anciently Elephantina, is an oval building, supported by pillars, forming a cloister or aisle. Similar to this is that in the ancient island of Philae. In most of these, are pillars fluted or clustered, like the Indian ones; and the rocks on both sides of the Nile are hollowed into grottoes, not unlike the buildings which are raised on the surface of the desert plains. The similar structures, which Mr. Norden describes in Nubia, are on the same plan; and, if we may judge from the few representations we have yet seen of the famous pagoda of Chillambrum, on the Coromandel coast, the resemblance approaches near to the Nubian and Egyptian temples."* A French Traveller of merit, however, whom I have frequently had occasion to cite, having more recently journied over the same ground, I prefer the presenting of *his* description of the ruins of temples of the Thebais to the reader; and he will himself, perhaps, be more gratified by an actual spectator's account of that grand sepulchre of ancient arts and sciences, EGYPT.

I shall begin the few quotations I shall make from M. Savary, by stating *a very singular circumstance;* a circumstance by no means the

* See a comparative view of the ancient monuments of India, published by Mr. Nichols in 1785, p. 15.

least remarkable among those with which he has made us acquainted: that the two branches of the Nile, which form the tract called the Delta, divide at the head of that Delta at a place called BATN EL BAKARI, or, *the Cow's Belly*; and the reader, by referring back to the preceding geographical treatise, will observe that the Ganges enters the region of Hindostan through the rock of GANGOTRI, or, *the Cow-head Rock.** Without hazarding any decision, or even venturing at present to give an opinion, which of these countries originally imparted its customs and manners thus remarkably correspondent to the other, I cannot omit the present opportunity of mentioning likewise *another striking trait*: that very high estimation in which, Herodotus† says, the plant of the LOTOS, which he emphatically denominates the lily of the Nile, was, in ancient times, holden *in Egypt*, and which is still considered as sacred *in India*. Herodotus flourished in the fifth century before Christ; and M. Savary, who writes in the eighteenth century of the Christian æra, affirms, that it is at this day regarded with the same

* Savary's Letters on Egypt, vol. i. p. 7. London edit. printed for Robinson.

† Vide Herodoti lib. i. p. 135, where the reader will find a description of this beautiful plant, not very dissimilar from that of Savary.

general and decided preference to all other plants.—He affirms the LOTOS to be an aquatic plant, peculiar to Egypt, and that it grows in rivulets and by the side of lakes, "There are two species," he observes; "the one bearing a white, the other a blueish flower. The calix of the LOTOS blows like that of a large tulip, diffusing a sweetness like the smell of the lily. The rivulets, near Damietta, are covered with this majestic flower, which rises about two feet above the water."* The SUGAR-CANE too, it should be observed, has been immemorially cultivated in either country; and some authors, M. Savary informs us, assert, that this plant was brought from India to Egypt. He himself, however, is inclined to think, that only the method of cultivating it was brought thence: the sugar-cane appears to him to be a native of a country which produces many species of reeds, and where it grows wild, while its very name of CASSAH, or reed, which it still bears, strongly corroborates his opinion. That the Indians early cultivated the sugar-cane, though they understood nothing of preparing it like the moderns, but only collected the exuded balsam, may be proved from Pliny;† and, that they

* Savary, vol. i. p. 8.

† Saccharum et Arabia fert; sed laudatius India. Plinii Nat. Hist. cap. xii. p. 361. Aldi edit.

must have had it in abundance, will be hereafter evinced from the very curious and novel circumstance, with which the following history will more particularly acquaint the reader, of an ancient king of India filling up the ditch of a besieged city with the large stalks of this plant. I need not cite any author to prove so notorious a fact, as that VEGETABLES anciently constituted the principal food of the Egyptians, as M. Savary and others acquaint us is the case at this day. Now vegetables, it will be remembered, form the principal sustenance of three out of the four great tribes of India. The priests of Egypt had a SACRED SACERDOTAL LANGUAGE and hieroglyphic character, the use of which was forbidden to the vulgar. The Brahmins have A SACRED LANGUAGE, which they call DEVANAGARI,* a word compounded of Deva, *divine*, and Nagari, *a city*; and this language is believed to have been revealed from heaven to those sages, by the divinity of India, in the same manner as the elements of the sacerdotal language of Egypt were supposed to be imparted by the elder HERMES. The Indians, according to Mr. Halhed † and others, as we shall

* Sir William Jones, in the Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 423.

† Halhed's Preface to the Code, p. 49, quarto edit.

see hereafter, are divided into four great CASTS, and one inferior tribe, called BURREN SUNKER. Diodorus Siculus * informs us, that the Egyptians likewise were divided into FIVE SEPARATE TRIBES, of which the first in order was the sacerdotal. The ABLUTIONS of the Egyptians were innumerable, if we may believe Herodotus ;† and I may here, with peculiar propriety *repeat* that the cow and the SERPENT were equally venerated in both countries. But, in treating of the AVATARS, having devoted a few pages to the consideration of what Father Bouchet has asserted, in the Lettres Edifiantes, that the Indians had borrowed most of their superstitious ceremonies from the Hebrews and Egyptians, I shall no longer detain the reader from the contemplation of those massy fabrics, the temples of Egypt. The construction and ornaments of these temples he will be naturally led to compare with those of India, and form that deduction as to the original designers, which he may think most reconcileable to reason and probability.

Let us then, attentive to the advice of Mr. Gough, once more turn the eye of admiration to the vast plain of Egypt; and, after survey-

* Diodori Siculi lib. i. p. 67, 68, edit. Rhodomani.
† Herodoti lib. ii. p. 116, edit. Stephan. 1592.

ing with silent astonishment the massy fragments of rock of which the pyramids are composed, as well as learning their exact dimensions from the accurate geometrician Mr. Greaves, let us again, with Norden and Pococke, ascend the more elevated region of the Thebais. We have already, with those travellers, explored the sacred caverns in which the ancient Cuthite devotion of Egypt, a devotion of gloom and melancholy, was practised; we have already penetrated with them into the sepulchral grottoes in which her departed monarchs lie entombed; let us now visit the august palaces in which those monarchs, when living, swayed the imperial sceptre; and the superb fanes, to this day glittering with gold and azure, in which the deities of Egypt were daily honoured with odoriferous incense, and the most costly oblations. To the more ample description of these celebrated travellers I shall add the cursory remarks of two recent travellers, M. Volney and M. Savary; the former of whom has with a bold and judicious pencil drawn the manners and genius of the *people*, while the other, with a pencil equally masterly, has sketched out the remains of her ancient grandeur, and brought them to our view in all the warmth of colouring which was natural to a man of genius and feeling, and

which apathy and ignorance unjustly consider as too gaudy and exaggerated. On such a subject, we may venture to say, no colouring can be too vivid, no language too animated, since all that the most glowing painting can delineate, and all that the most fervid eloquence describe, must come far short of the truth.

This review, however, of the remaining monuments of the ancient grandeur of Egypt cannot fail of exciting in us mingled sensations of exquisite delight and pungent sorrow. Of these monuments the more majestic and stupendous will probably remain, to the latest posterity, sublime testimonies of the ingenuity, the patience, and perseverance, of their original fabricators. Of the temples less conspicuous for magnitude, and more distinguished by beauty than grandeur, many lie at present overwhelmed amidst the mountains of sand and rubbish that surround them; many more are daily crumbling into dust; and, in a few revolving centuries, by far the greater portion of them, from the united ravages of time and the barbarians, will undoubtedly be buried in the same profound oblivion which has obscured the arts, the sciences, and the genius, of the renowned progeny of Mizraim.

From the present desolated state of Egypt,

as well as from the numerous perils and obstructions that inevitably await the adventurous traveller, who would explore the Thebais, the modern account of M. Savary may possible be among the last which this age may receive of a country at present bowed down beneath the iron hand of remorseless despotism and worse than Gothic ignorance; a country, from which the SUN, the great OSIRIS, once so universally adored throughout its limits; the SUN, once so triumphant a witness of the prowess and the splendour of his favoured race, (if that SUN were in reality the ANIMATED INTELLIGENCE their frantic superstition pictured him,) would avert his abhorrent beam, and leave the grovelling and spiritless descendents of the ancient Egyptians in endless darkness. Who, indeed, that is fired with the love of liberty and science, can without indignation behold the superb temples and august palaces of the Thebais converted into hovels for cattle, full of dung and filth, and the stately and beautiful columns of marble, brought from the quarries of SYENE to adorn them, daily carried away by the Arabs, or sawed into pieces to make mill-stones? Who, that reflects upon the astonishing population and unbounded plenty which in happier ages distinguished the celebrated and fertile valley, whence

the light of science was diffused through Greece, and from Greece through all the European world, can, without a sigh of generous anguish, read, in M. Volney's interesting narrative, that it is at this day alternately ravaged by famine and pestilence; the groves of olive, where philosophy once flourished in meridian pride, gleaming with the arms of fierce warriors; and the beautiful banks of the Nile, where the loveliest flowers used to blossom, and where soft music warbled to the sound of the vibrating oar, crimsoned with the blood of the inhabitant, and echoing with the shrieks of despair and death? It would now be all in vain that the star of the Nile,* the watchful SIRIUS, from his lofty station in the skies, should proclaim to the pining natives the commencement of the NEW YEAR, that year, once ushered in with dance and song, but now, alas! to be begun with anguish, and toiled through in successive scenes of suffering and calamity: that year, in which they are doomed to tend for others the reddening grain, and cultivate the luxurious date without enjoying its refreshing produce.

* The Egyptians emphatically called this star the BARKER, as well from its more common name the *dog-star*, as from its being the faithful centinel, whose appearance gave notice that the NEW YEAR was begun, ever considered as a season of high festivity.

Eusebius acquaints us* that the Egyptians asserted they were the most ancient nation of the earth, and that, from the temperance of their climate and the great fertility produced by the annual inundations of the river Nile, the region inhabited by them was the most proper country to be the nursing mother of the human race. With what little foundation in truth this assertion was made will hereafter, I trust, be made sufficiently evident, when, in the first volume of my history, I shall consider the various and rival claims to precedence, in point of antiquity, of all the Oriental nations. For the present it may be sufficient to remark, that a country, annually overflowed, could never have been the most convenient residence for the human race in infancy, who must necessarily be without a knowledge of the arts necessary to check the incursion of the water, and without the benefits of experience to guard against the repetition of its ravages. The first descending inundation would probably have swept away a third part of the inhabitants, while a second bade fair to annihilate their rising colony. This assertion too is directly contrary to their account of the gradual accumulation of sand and mud necessary

* Vide Eusebius de Preparatione Evangelica, lib. ii. cap. 1. p. 16, in the Latin edition of his works, 1631.

to consititute the Delta, upon the number of years necessary to the formation of which they advanced one argument in favour of the high antiquity both of the earth and of themselves. But whether that Delta were in reality formed after the manner stated in Herodotus, by which it would appear that the world was eighteen thousand years old, is a point that will admit of great dispute, and, in fact, has been the subject of warm contention between the two latest travellers in Egypt, M. Volney and M. Savary, whose respective opinions on this subject, so connected as it is with that of the DELTAS, natural phænomena of a kindred kind and origin in India, formed at the mouths of the Ganges and Indus, it will be my business to state somewhat at large hereafter.

To what I have already observed, from the president of the Asiatic Society, relative to the name of the Nile, I must here be permitted to add, that this seems by no means to have been the most ancient appellation of the river of Egypt, for, it is a fact, equally wonderful and true, that Homer, the most venerable of poets, and in whose sublime work D'Anville affirms are traced the first and truest outlines of ancient geography, never once mentions that river by the name of Νεῖλος, but constantly by that of

Αιγυπτος, the river Ægyptus. Had the river of Egypt been then commonly known in Greece by the former name, it is reasonable to think Homer would not have neglected to use the appellation. The term Ægyptus itself is, by some learned etymologists, derived from the primary root *Coptos*, with *αῖα*, the Greek word for country, prefixed. From Æcoptus, the land of the Copts, Ægyptus might easily be formed; and that this derivation is not entirely fanciful is evident from Coptos, being a name which is, to this day, retained by a most ancient city of the Thebais: possibly in the most early periods, the capital of the ancient Coptic race, who gave their name to the river upon whose banks they dwelt.* Its native appellation of Nile is supposed to have been derived from Nilus, the first king of that name, and the seventh of the Diospolitan dynasty of Egyptian kings. Nilus flourished a little before the taking of Troy, and is said, by Diodorus Siculus, to have made several ample canals as reservoirs for its waters: but, it is more probable, that this king derived his name from Nihal, which in Coptic, signifies THE RIVER, than the river from him. It was variously called, by the Greek historians Ὠκεανος, Μελας, Σιρις, and it is very remarkable that

* See Jackson's Chronol. Antiq. vol. ii. p. 208.

most of these names signify, *not blue*, as might seem from Sir William's Sanscreet derivation, but *black*; black being the colour equally belonging to the water and the soil. The country itself was likewise called Χημια, not so much from Ham, or Cham, whose posterity peopled it, as, if Plutarch may be credited,* from the blackness of the soil peculiar to Upper Egypt, resembling the sight of the eye, which, in Coptic, they denominated by a term similar to the Greek Chemia. Hence we read, in Stephanus Byzantinus upon this word, that Egypt was sometimes called Ἑρμοχυμιος, the black country of Hermes, or Mercury; that is, the Indian Boodh.

Of those stupendous erections, the three greater pyramids, those *audacia saxa pyramidum*, as they are called by Statius,† erected in the Libyan Egypt, near Memphis, in a region now called Geza; of the æras in which they were fabricated; and of the purposes for which they were originally intended, so much has already been written by our own countrymen, Pococke and Greaves, by the ingenious Norden, and the whole body of French travellers, that it would be an unpardonable intrusion upon the time of my readers, as well as foreign to the more

* Vide Plutarch de Iside et Osiride, p. 364.

† Stat. lib. v. Sylv. 3.

immediate purpose of this publication, which is principally to compare the features of the national architecture, and examine the hieroglyphic mythology which decorates their buildings, to enter into any very extended description beyond that of the dimensions of each, and the magnitude of some of the massy stones which compose them. Of the first and grand pyramid, asserted by Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus to have been built by Cheops, the eighth monarch of the twentieth dynasty of Egyptian kings, denominated Diospolitan, from their capital of Diospolis in Upper Egypt, about eleven hundred years before Christ, the dimensions, according to the authors just cited, are as follows. Herodotus asserts of this enormous mass of stone, that each side of the base, on which it stands, extended eight hundred feet; that its altitude from that base to the summit was the same number of feet, and that each stone, which composed the building was no less than thirty feet in length. Herodotus farther learned from the Egyptian priests, from whom his account was taken, that, during the whole period of twenty years, which were consumed in the erection of it, four hundred thousand men were constantly employed, one hundred thousand men succeeding each other in alternate rotation

every three months; that the expence in onions, parsley and garlic, for the labourers alone, amounted to 1600 talents of silver; and that this account was engraved in large Egyptian letters upon the pyramid itself. Diodorus Siculus states the length of each side of the base at seven hundred feet, and the height at no more than six hundred feet: the square on the summit he describes as six cubits. He relates that it was situated 120 furlongs, or fifteen miles, distant from Memphis, and 45 furlongs, about six miles, distant from the Nile.

Of these two relations, the latter, by Diodorus Siculus, seems to be far more consant to that of the accurate Mr. Greaves than that of Herodotus; for, that profound geometrician, on measuring the altitude of it in the year 1638, found its perpendicular height to be 499 English feet, and the length of the sides he found to be 693 feet. Mr. Greaves imputes the great dissimilitude between his own account and that of Herodotus to the difference between the Grecian and English feet; but also adds, that, "in his own judgment, the relation of Diodorus comes nearest to the truth." He describes the summit as terminating, "not in a point, like true mathematical pyramids, but in a little flat, or square," though it appears no more than a

point from below, which square, "by his own measure is thirteen feet, and 280 of 1000 parts of the English foot." This particular statement exhibits a remarkable proof of the correctness of this traveller's observations. "Upon this flat," he adds, "if we assent to the opinion of Proclus upon the Timæus of Plato, it may be supposed that the Egyptian priests made their observations in astronomy; and that hence or near this place they first discovered, by the rising of Sirius, their ANNUS κυνικὸς, or CANICULARIS, as also their PERIODUS SOTHIACUS, or ANNUS MAGNUS κυνικὸς or ANNUS HELIACUS, or ANNUS DEI, as it is termed by Censorinus, consisting of 1460 siderial years, in which space their *Thoth vagum et fixum* came to have the same beginning."* In a hasty citation of this author, from memory only, in a preceding page, I have been guilty of an error in ascribing these sentiments to Greaves which are quoted from Proclus.† The opinion of Mr. Greaves is not entirely coincident with that of Proclus; but Mr. Greaves, though a profound astronomer, was less acquainted than his author with the astronomical theology of the ancients. Mr. Greaves inclines to think that the pyramids

* See Greaves's Works, vol. i. p. 100, ubi supra.

† See the preceding volume, p. 329.

were sepulchres rather than astronomical obser-vatories, or temples to the deity: "for to what purpose," he observes, "should the priests, with so much difficulty, ascend so high, when, below, with more ease and as much certainty, they might, from their own lodgings, hewn in the rock upon which the pyramids were erected, make the same observations?" But that some motives, either of a religious or a philosophical kind, swayed the mind of those who erected the pyramids, is evident from the very mode of their fabrication, with regular steps "running round the pyramid in a level line, and making a long, but narrow walk, by which, as by so many stairs, the summit may be gradually as-cended;" that summit not ending in a pyrami-dal point, but forming a flat square more than thirteen feet in breadth.

If I might be permitted to offer an opinion upon a subject concerning which the learned have been so greatly divided in sentiment, I should be induced, by the following circum-stances, to conceive the use to which they were anciently applied to have been *threefold*, and to consider them at once as TOMBS, TEMPLES, and OBSERVATORIES. If it could be proved beyond all doubt that the Egyptian pyramids were solely intended by their fabricators for tombs,

the argument would by no means tend to disprove they were temples, or not used as observatories. It is unnecessary for me to repeat in this place, that the deities, honoured in the Pagan world, were not originally adored in temples raised by the labour of man, but on the summit of hills, and in the recesses of sacred caverns. According to some of the most esteemed authors of classical antiquity, the first temples ever erected upon earth, were sepulchral monuments, in which sacred rites were performed in honour of the memory of those whom the blind admiration and slavish obedience of their subjects exalted, when dead, to the rank of deities. As, by a strain of unmanly flattery, too general even at this day through all the Oriental world, they had compared them, when living, to the brightest of the heavenly host, and even distinguished them by their names; so, when entombed, they paid to them the honours conferred by their abject superstition upon the planetary train. But as the planet, by far the most glorious and conspicuous of them all, was the SUN, and as it was customary to represent him by pyramids and obelisks, the sepulchral monument likewise assumed the pyramidal form, a form which brought at once to their minds the deity himself and the deified

mortal. Theology and astronomy, I have observed, were in those days, sister sciences; and, under the double impression of their influence, it was natural for the ancients, to make their sacred edifices useful to the cultivation of their darling science. It was natural for them to *observe* with more fixed and enthusiastic attention, as well as to *adore* with more intense fervor, the solar deity on the elevated apex of that temple, which was at once erected to his honour, and bore impressed the sacred form of his own majestic beam.

Concerning the dimensions of the exterior stones that constitute this pyramid, though Mr. Greaves says he can by no means agree with Herodotus and Pomponius Mela, who make the least stone in it to be thirty feet in magnitude, yet he is willing to allow all the stones to be of that dimension, if we may be allowed to understand those words in the sense of thirty cubical feet, since many of them are of a size still greater than even that enormous proportion. Concerning those of the stones which form the interior region of this pyramid, especially of that solitary and solemn chamber in the dark bosom of this stony recess, his own relation is too interesting to be abridged. "This rich and spacious apartment, in which art may seem to have contended with nature, the curious work

being not inferior to the rich materials, is formed in the heart and centre of the pyramid, equidistant on all the sides, and almost in the midst between the basis and the summit. The floor, the sides, the roof, of it are all made of vast and exquisite tables of Thebaic marble, which, if they were not veiled and obscured by the steam of tapers, would appear glistering and shining. The stones which cover this place are of a strange and stupendous length, like so many huge beams lying flat and traversing the room, and withal supporting that infinite mass and weight of the pyramid above."* The room itself Mr. Greaves describes as exceeding in length thirty-four English feet, the consequent length of those amazing slabs that form the ceiling; the breadth of it as seventeen feet; and the height as nineteen feet and a half.

There is a novel and exceedingly curious observation, in regard to this pyramid, made by the French traveller, M. Maillet, who visited it no less than forty times, to obtain complete information concerning its form and design, and who has given the best description of it extant. This gentleman, after assenting to the general conjecture, that it was originally intended for the sepulchre of Cheops, or some

* See Greaves's Works, vol. i. p. 126.

other most ancient sovereign of Egypt, gives it as his decided opinion, that, according to a barbarous custom in the Oriental world, of the prevalency of which I have exhibited so many striking instances among the Indian rajahs and Tartar monarchs, with that sovereign, whosoever he might have been, other human beings were ENTOMBED ALIVE; and, in support of this opinion he advances the following facts. Exactly in the centre of the chamber, according to M. Maillet's accurate survey, "are two cavities opposite to each other, three feet and a half above the floor. The one turning to the north is a foot in width, eight inches in height, and runs, in a right angle, to the outside of the pyramid: this cavity is now stopped up with stones five or six feet from its mouth. The other, cut towards the east, the same distance from the floor, is perfectly round, and wide enough to receive the two fists of a man; it enlarges at first to a foot in diameter, and loses itself as it descends towards the bottom of the pyramid."* The former of these cavities he conjectures to have been intended as a kind of canal for the conveyance of air, food, and such

* See the whole account of M. Maillet inserted in Savary on Egypt, vol. i. p. 214.

other necessaries to the miserable beings, inclosed with the corpse of their monarch, as long as life remained to them; and he makes no doubt but they were provided with a long case, proportioned to the size of the cavity, with a cord affixed to each end of it, by which it was drawn in by the persons incarcerated, and, when emptied of its contents, drawn back by those who supplied their necessities from without. Each of these victims he supposes to have been provided with a coffin to contain his corpse, and that they successively rendered this last sad duty to each other till only one remained, who must necessarily want the benefit of the pious boon conferred by him on his deceased companions. The other cavity on the east, which descended down towards the bottom of the pyramid, he presumes was meant for the passage of excrements and other filth, which fell into some deep place made for the purpose of receiving them. This deep place he would gladly have explored; and, had he found any thing like it on the outside, corresponding with the oblong cavity within, he tells us he should have considered it as an irrefragable testimony of his hypothesis. But from making this search he was prevented by the fear of giving umbrage or exciting alarm in the jealous Arabian

governors of the country, whose myrmidons always narrowly watch the motions of Europeans; those inquisitive Europeans whom they suppose to be guided less by harmless curiosity, than urged by insatiable avarice in quest of concealed treasures, and whom they suspect to be armed with talismans of tremendous power to tear it from its dark recess in the bosom of the earth.

The whole of this relation is consistent with probability, and conformable to the manners of those remote æras. Whether or not, however, there be any truth in the conjecture of the sovereign's attendants being interred with him, this at least is evident, from the circumstances enumerated of the passages for the admission of fresh air and other necessaries, that officiating priests attended in this chamber, made sacred by the ashes of the dead, and performed solemn rites in honour of the deceased.

We have read that, in India, cakes and water were offered to the dead, without which offerings the ghost of the defunct wandered sorrowful and un-appeased. Even the distant apprehension of wanting this posthumous blessing thrilled with horror the soul of the Indian sovereign Dushmanta.* It is more than possible, from the

* See, of this volume, part i. p. 190.

early intimacy of the two nations, that similar sentiments pervaded the breast of the Egyptian monarchs, and that priests, either entombed for life, or having access to the centre of the pyramid by some secret passage now unknown, in alternate succession took up there their solitary abode, attended to pay the funeral rites, to watch the embalmed corpse, and light anew the expiring taper. This will account for the well which brought into the pyramid the waters of the Nile, equally consecrated with those of the Ganges, the secret passage near that well, and the houses of the priests adjoining the pyramid, which have been minutely described, in a former page, from Mr. Greaves. For what reason, indeed should there be houses of the priests adjoining, unless the pyramid, although originally erected for a tomb, were not occasionally used as a temple, a temple probably in which the most profound arcana of the Egyptian theology were laid open to the initiated, and the most gloomy orgies anciently celebrated propitiary of malignant dæmons, and stained with human blood. Every remnant, however, of a skeleton has for ages mouldered away, and, together with that which contained it, has long ago been reduced to its original dust. It is difficult to conceive that what is called the

sarcophagus could ever have contained a human body, since the sarcophagi of the Egyptians were always placed erect, and never laid flat; nor, as Mr. Bryant has judiciously observed, is there any one instance upon record of an Egyptian being entombed in this manner. It was, therefore, a cistern to contain the water of purification,* brought from the adjoining Nile, a river, which in Egypt was holden in a light equally sacred as was the Ganges in Hindostan, whose waters are conveyed to the most distant regions of that country, and into whose stream the expiring Hindoo plunges, in the rapturous hope of gliding into paradise through its consecrated wave.

The second of these enormous pyramidal fabrics was, according to Herodotus, erected by Chephren, the brother of Cheops, about fifty years after the former, and Diodorus Siculus states each side of the base at six hundred feet, which is one hundred feet less than the lateral dimensions of that pyramid. Mr. Greaves, however, found them both, in point of height and latitude, to be nearly equal. The third pyramid, asserted by Herodotus to have been the fabrication of the son of Cheops, towards

* See Mr. Bryant's Analysis, vol. iii. p. 530, and Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 70.

the close of the eleventh century before Christ, is very considerably smaller than the foregoing. As the first has been so minutely described, there is no occasion for entering into any enumeration of particulars relative to the two latter, into the internal regions of which no visible entrance has ever yet been discovered by human sagacity.

The result of this investigation is, that, in the general form of their construction, in the massy stones that compose them, and in the purposes to which they were applied, a striking similarity between these lofty Ægyptian edifices and the more ancient pagodas of India, which we have observed universally assume the pyramidal figure, prevails throughout. The observation holds equally true of the Egyptian, as of the Indian temples, that they are constructed with such mathematical precision, as that their sides correspond with the FOUR CARDINAL POINTS OF THE WORLD; and, it should be remembered, that, in the inscription on the surface of the grand pyramid, as before related from Herodotus, we have an additional and incontestible proof, that, as well in the most remote, as in the more recent ages, the food of the native Egyptians and of the Indians consisted of A VEGETABLE DIET.

Before we quit the pyramids, I must be permitted to make one reflection, to which indeed I shall not at present subjoin any additional observations, but the consideration of which will finally be of the utmost importance in summing up the evidence relative to this comparative parallel of the antiquities of Egypt and India, deduced from the examination of their proficiency in architectural knowledge and cultivation of the arts and languages in general. On no part of the three great pyramids, internal or external, does there appear the least sign of those hieroglyphic sculptures which so conspicuously and so totally cover the temples, the obelisks, and colossal statues of Upper Egypt. This exhibits demonstrative proof, that, at the period of the construction of those masses, that kind of hieroglyphic decoration was not invented; for, had that sacerdotal character been then formed, they would undoubtedly not have been destitute of them. The pyramids were, therefore, fabricated in æras far more remote than those assigned by Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus; in the very infancy and dawn of science, when as yet possibly mankind knew not how to form the arched and ponderous roof, or to support that roof with graceful columns. Let human pride be humbled by the reflection, that some of the most stupendous

prodigies in architecture of the ancients owed their origin to their ignorance. Had they known that water would rise nearly to the same elevation as that from which it falls, those amazing productions of human labour, the aqueducts, would never have excited at once the astonishment and admiration of their wiser posterity.

The prodigious dimensions of the SPHYNX have already engaged our attention. It exhibits another striking proof how eager the ancients were to grasp at that kind of immortality which enormous structures of a sepulchral kind bestow on their vain fabricators; for, according to Pliny,* it was the tomb of King Amasis. Travellers have discovered in the back part of the huge rock, out of which it is excavated, an opening into a cavern, or mausoleum, of proportions adequate to the magnitude of its external appearance. This notion of constructing tombs of a vast size, and at the same time inaccessible, was in particular connected with the theology of the ancient Egyptians, who were of opinion, that, as long as the body could be preserved perfect, the soul, of the transmigration of which they were strenuous believers, deserted not its former companion during the period of its own sojourning amidst the inferior spheres. Though

* Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. xxxvi. cap. 22.

they knew its vital energy had ceased to animate the various members, yet they fondly flattered themselves that it continued hovering as a faithful guardian round its former habitation, and, at length, reluctantly left the mouldering clay. The soul, after this desertion of its ancient comrade, continued its extensive circuit in the successive animation of various other forms, terrestrial, aquatic, and ætherial, and, according to Herodotus, finally finished its wanderings in the space of three thousand years.*

In this comparative retrospect upon the ancient works of the Egyptians and the Indians, the surprising dimensions of the grand artificial lake, built by Mæris, and distinguished by his name, ought not to be passed by entirely unnoticed. Herodotus, possibly taking into his account the whole extent of that vast valley at this day called BABER-BELLOMAH, or *the Sea without water*, states the whole circumference of this lake at 450 miles. The modern statement of Pococke, who gives its dimensions as 50 miles long and 10 broad, is, however, far more probable, and a lake of such extent might surely be sufficient to confer immortality on one sovereign. Many of the ancient reservoirs in

* See Herodotus, lib. ii. p. 150.

India, fabricated to receive the waters of the Ganges, and other great rivers, at the period of the annual inundations, are of a magnitude scarcely less astonishing, while those of inferior size and more recent date are finished in a style of execution equally wonderful, being flanked with freestone, and having regular steps descending into the capacious bason. They are numerous in every part of India, but more particularly in the Peninsula, and are adapted both to political and pious purposes.

From ranging the valley of the Delta, and from surveying its prodigies, let us ascend to the contemplation of the magnificent edifices that adorn the regions of the Thebais. Passing by Memphis, once so famous for the worship of the god-bull Apis, but of which scarcely any apparent ruins remain to mark the disputed spot, let us attend to that most extensive and sumptuous structure, where painting, sculpture, and astronomical science, united their powers to adorn the superb sepulchral temple of Osymandes, near Thebes. Osymandes was one of the most ancient kings of Thebes, and, like many other Egyptian sovereigns of remote antiquity, has been often confounded with the great Osiris. It will be of more importance to describe the temple itself, than to engage in any useless

disquisition concerning the fabricator. This august building is the most perfect of all those of the great Diospolis, or ancient Thebes, at present denominated Luxorein, or Luxore. The account given of it by Diodorus Siculus is very minute, but too long for entire insertion, especially as it is my intention to illustrate that account by the additional observations of Pococke and Norden. The entrance into it was through a grand pyramidal gateway, two hundred feet in length, and sixty-two feet and a half in height, which latter proportion Pococke thinks is far under-rated by Diodorus, since they are even at present fifty-four feet above ground; and, from the great drift of sand, by which some colossal statues near it are half-buried, he is of opinion they must have sunk more than eight feet and a half. This ancient temple itself, instead of being built in the pyramidal style, consisted, like some of the Indian pagodas, of a variety of courts and inclosures, one within the other; and, in particular, a grand colonnade of stone is mentioned, every side of which extended 400 feet in length. Instead of pillars, according to that classic, the fabric was supported by colossal figures of animals, each composed of a single stone, and carved in an antique style. He adds, what

cannot fail to fill the reader with astonishment at the skill of the Egyptian architects, "that the whole roof was contracted into the breadth of eight cubits, was all one single stone, and spangled with stars on a sky-coloured ground." In the interior recesses were other courts, all the walls of which were covered with sculptures; some representing the warlike feats of this great prince, who in reality, was no other than Sesostris; some of venerable personages, arrayed in the ensigns of justice, like those described by Mr. Hunter in the caverns of Elephanta, and ready to execute judgment upon the attendant criminals; others again performing sacrifice to the numerous gods of Egypt, distinguished by their respective symbols. In the centre of these courts were statues of a gigantic size, one of which represented Osymandes himself, distinguished by this inscription: "I am Osymandes, king of kings. If any one should be desirous of knowing what kind of a prince I am, and where I lie, let him excel my exploits!" Around this principal statue were other colossal figures, his supposed relatives, in various attitudes. But what conferred on this sumptuous temple its greatest celebrity, was the vast circle of wrought gold, a cubit in thickness, and 365 cubits in circumference, denoting the days of the improved

year, on which were marked the heliacal risings and settings of the stars for every day of that year, with the consequent prognostications of the Egyptian astrologers.* This circumstance I have elsewhere urged as a remarkable proof of the early and deep proficiency of the Egyptians in astronomy, since the temple of Osymandes is asserted by Scaliger on Herodotus to have been erected by Sesostris; after his Bactrian expedition, designated among those sculptures, thirteen hundred years at least before the Christian æra. This great golden circle was carried away by Cambyses, when he ravaged Egypt, and slew the god Apis, in the sixth century before the commencement of that æra; and Mr. Norden declares, "that, at the period of his visit to this temple, in 1738, there still appeared to be the mark where that circle was fixed."† Diodorus informs us, that the whole of this grand edifice extended one mile and a quarter in circumference; and a plan of the whole, with designs of particular parts, may be seen in the 40th plate in Dr. Pococke's Egypt.

Thus superb, thus magnificent, was the sepulchral temple of a DEIFIED MORTAL. Let us

* Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 45, et preced.

† Norden's Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. ii. p. 65.

turn our eye to yonder still more amazing pile of ruins, and mark, amidst mountains of subverted columns and colossal statues overthrown, with what profusion of cost and pomp the ancient Thebans adorned the temple of DEITY ITSELF. The most ancient of the four temples that adorned Thebes was indeed astonishingly superb, and worthy of the city which Homer calls ἑκατόμπυλος, or possessing a hundred portals; that celebrated city

> Which spread her conquests o'er a thousand states,
> And pour'd her heroes through a hundred gates.

This description, whether the word ἑκατόμπυλος be considered in a literal sense, or only as a finite used for an indefinite number, decisively points out the period of the proudest glory of the Theban empire, which, as Homer's correctness may be depended upon, was about the time of the Trojan war, that is, 1200 years before the Christian æra. This circumstance should be attended to, and will be of great importance when we shall commence our investigation concerning the disputed priority of the Indians and Egyptians in point of national population and grandeur. "The circumference of this most grand and most ancient temple, according to Diodorus, was thirteen stadia, its height forty-five cubits, and the breadth of its

walls twenty-four feet. Proportionate to its external magnificence, he observes, were its internal decorations, and the offerings with which it was enriched; for their intrinsic value astonishing, but still more so for the exquisite delicacy with which they were fabricated." Diodorus adds, that the edifice remained entire in his time in considerable splendour, but that the gold and silver ornaments and utensils, with all the costly ivory and precious stones, which it once boasted, were pillaged by the Persians when Cambyses set fire to the temples of Egypt. He farther intimates, that, by the artists carried in captivity to Persia, the proud palaces of Persepolis and Susa were built. But, though that point be disputable, there cannot be a doubt that they were decorated with their spoils and enriched with their treasures. Even in the rubbish collected together, after the insatiable avarice of that ravager had gratified itself in plunder, and, after the fire had exhausted its rage, there were found, "of gold more than 300 talents, of silver near 2300 talents."*

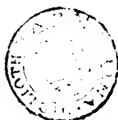
Of the original plan and existing ruins of this grand temple, unrivalled in the universe, Pococke has given an accurate description and designs; and Norden, whom his tyrant Arabian

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii. cap. 30.

escort prevented from landing, has presented us with correct views of the several gateways. Of the principal and most superb portal, with the stately obelisks before it, an engraving taken from the latter traveller's beautiful drawings, forms the frontispiece of this volume. Its astonishing depth and massy solidity seem to promise an eternal duration to this immense edifice; while the obelisks bid fair likewise to remain as immortal monuments of the skill and correct taste of the old Egyptians. The thickness of the portal is forty feet, and the height of the obelisks, each of which consists of one solid block of granite, is sixty-three feet four inches, beside what remains buried beneath the drifted sand. The completion of this magnificent fane seems to have been the labour of many ages, and the decoration of it the pride of the successive monarchs of Thebes. Eight sovereigns might have respectively gained deserved immortality by the erection of the eight different gates, each of which is finished in a different style; some towering in simple majesty without ornament, and others totally covered with the most beautiful hieroglyphics.

Proceeding farther, you come into the sacred library, with a very remarkable inscription upon it, which Diodorus renders Ψυχῆς Ιατρεῖον, the

Dispensatory of the Soul. Here, as in a grand Pantheon, all the gods of Egypt, with their various symbols, were finely sculptured. It was here that Pococke copied those two remarkable sculptures exhibited in his forty-second plate, representing the ceremony of carrying Osiris, the *gubernator mundi*, in his boat; the first borne by twelve men, the second by eighteen. These have been re-engraved in Mr. Bryant's Analysis, in corroboration of an hypothesis upon which his ingenious book principally turns, and the outlines of which are exhibited to the reader in a former page of these Dissertations. A ceremony, resembling this, at this day prevails in India, which possibly might have had a similar origin, I mean that of annually committing the image of Durga to the Ganges, after the celebration of her rites on the solemn festivity of that goddess. Among the particular hieroglyphic figures on the walls, Dr. Pococke observed "one that had a tortoise on the head for a cap," most probably that Hermes, whose emblem was the testudo, the proper symbol of the god of eloquence and music, the former of which doubtless gave birth to the Apollo of Greece, and the latter to his celebrated lyre. Hermes, it will be remembered, was the god who first taught the Egyptians



letters, and accompanied Osiris in his famous expedition to conquer, that is, to *improve* and *reform* the world, and to teach mankind the arts of agriculture. He is, therefore, here properly attended, as Pococke farther relates in his description of the sculptures of this magnificent room, by a man leading *four bulls* with a string, (Pococke, p. 108,) and with instruments of sacrifice to the sun, of whom Osiris, in his mythological character, is the representative. Dr. Pococke mentions also other sculptures, with hawks' heads, the bird sacred to the Nile, bearing the consecrated cross, a symbol explained in a preceding page. Diodorus has mentioned likewise, as part of these sculptures, a representation of the annual offering to the deity of the gold and silver collected out of the mines of Egypt. And nothing surely could be more proper than the offering of that gold and silver to the solar deity, whose beams, penetrating into the deep recesses of the earth, matured, in its dark bosom, the glowing ore. The sun, sailing round the world in a boat, is one of the most frequent symbols of the Egyptians, and the twelve men carrying it on their shoulders, were doubtless meant to shadow out the *twelve months*. All these circumstances alluded to the celebrated expedition of Osiris, mentioned above

upon which, as I must enter at large in the early period of my history, it is unnecessary for me in this place to expatiate.

In giving an account of the internal recesses of this temple, Dr. Pococke* describes "a dark granite room of more than ordinary sanctity," which he thinks was the place allotted for the noble virgin, who, according to Strabo,† was annually, in a very singular manner, consecrated to the deity. The Egyptians, however, not only consecrated virgins, but, like all the other nations of the ancient world, profusely shed in sacrifice the blood of human beings. They in particular, as Diodorus informs us,‡ sacrificed red-haired men at the tomb of Osiris, because his mortal enemy Typhon, was of that colour. Busiris sacrificed Thracius to appease the angry Nile; and three men were daily sacrificed to Lucina at Heliopolis; instead of which, King Amasis afterwards humanely ordered as many waxen images to be offered. A similar story is related by an Arabian writer, and his account is greatly corroborated by the relation of a practice witnessed by a recent traveller. This Arabian author is by name Murtadi, who has written a curious treatise on the prodigies of

* Pococke, p. 95. † Strabo, lib xvii. p. 816.

‡ Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 99.

Egypt, which M. Vatier translated into French, and affirms that it was anciently a custom of the Egyptians to sacrifice to the river Nile a young and beautiful virgin, whom, arrayed in rich robes, they hurled into the stream. The ancient Persians, we have remarked from Herodotus in a preceding page, observed the same inhuman custom; for, when Darius arrived at the Strymon, he caused nine young men to be thrown into that river. It is very remarkable, that, at this day, some remains of this barbarous custom may be traced in Egypt; for, according to M. Savary, "they annually make a clay statue in the form of a woman, which they call *the Betrothed*, and, placing it on the mound of the Khalig, or canal, of the prince of the faithful, throw it into the river previous to the opening of the dam."* This reminds me of a passage in Sonnerat, who says the Indians, to some of their gods, at this day sacrifice *horses made of clay*, an undoubted substitute for the Aswamedha jug. Sanguinary and ferocious as the Mohammedans themselves are in propagating their religion by the sword, it is to their honour that they have, both in India and Egypt, uniformly endeavoured to put a stop to these bloody sacrifices. In Egypt the Caliph Omar

* Savary's Letters on Egypt, vol. i. p. 118.

effected it in a manner of which the same Murtadi, a superstitious Mohammedan, has given a curious relation, by throwing into the water a letter addressed to the Nile, and commanding that river, in the name of God and Mohammed, to flow with its usual abundance and fertilize the land; which behest the river immediately obeyed, to the astonishment and conversion of the infidels. In India their severe mulcts on those infatuated women, who commit themselves to the flames on the funeral pile of their husbands, have rendered that horrid practice far less common; and the English, adding their authority to that of the Mohammedans, have greatly contributed to abolish the bloody rite in the precincts of their domain. "Here," says Dr. Pococke, "I finished my observations on the ancient city of Thebes, celebrated by the first of poets and historians that are now extant; that venerable city, the date of whose ruin is older than the foundation of most other cities; and yet such vast and surprising remains are still to be seen of its magnificence and solidity, as may convince any one that beholds them, that, without some extraordinary accidents, they must have lasted for ever, as, in fact, seems to have been the intention of the founders of them."*

* See Pococke, p. 109.

M. Savary having visited this celebrated spot so recently as the year 1779, it will doubtless gratify curiosity to see his account of the two magnificent ruins just described. The entrance into the sepulchral shrine of Osymandes M. Savary describes to be " under a portico sixty feet high, supported by two rows of large columns. In this massy marble building, and the hieroglyphics with which it abounds, we discover the work of the ancient Egyptians. Beyond is a temple three hundred feet in length, and one hundred and forty-five feet wide; at the entrance is an immense hall, containing eight-and-twenty columns, sixty feet high, and nineteen in circumference at the base; they stand each twelve feet asunder: the enormous stones of the ceiling are so perfectly joined and inserted one in the other, as to appear to the eye one solid marble slab, a hundred and twenty-six feet in length, and forty-six in breadth; the walls are loaded with innumerable hieroglyphics, among which is a multitude of animals, birds, and human figures. The traveller recognizes, among the designs engraved on the marble, the divinities of INDIA; the rudeness of the sculpture bespeaks antiquity and art in its infancy."*

* M. Savary's Letters on Egypt, vol. ii. p. 6.

M. Savary concludes this description with asking, "Have the Egyptians received these deities from the Indians, or the Indians from the Egyptians?" I hope to be able hereafter to give a satisfactory answer to this interesting question.

M. Savary's description of the present appearance of the august abode of the deity above-described is too interesting and too spirited to be omitted.

"Near Carnac, we find the remains of one of the four principal temples, mentioned by Diodorus Siculus. There are eight entrances to it, three of which have a SPHYNX of gigantic size, standing in front, with two colossal statues on each side of the sphynx, which are respectively cut from a single block of marble in the antique taste. Crossing these majestic avenues we come to four porticoes, each thirty feet wide, fifty-two in height, and one hundred and fifty in length. The entrance into these is through pyramidal gates, and the ceiling is formed of stones of an astonishing size, supported by the two walls. The first of these porticoes is entirely of red granite, perfectly polished. Colossal figures, rising fifteen feet above the bottom of the door, decorate its sides; without are two statues, thirty-three feet high; the one of red

granite, the other spotted with black and grey; and within is another, of a single block of marble, wanting the head, each bearing a kind of cross in its hand, that is to say, a PHALLUS, *which, among the Egyptians was the symbol of fertility.* The second portico is half destroyed; the gate has only two rows of hieroglyphics of gigantic size, one towards the south, the other towards the north. Each front of the third portico is covered with hieroglyphics of colossal figures; and, at the entrance of the gate, are the remains of a statue of white marble, the trunk of which is fifteen feet in circumference, and the statue itself wears a helmet, round which a *serpent* is turned. The fourth portico consists of little more than walls, almost entirely destroyed, and heaps of rubbish, among which are parts of a colossus of red granite, the body of which is thirty feet round. Beyond these porticoes, the high walls, which form the first court of the temple, began. The people entered at twelve gates; several are destroyed and others very ruinous. That, which has suffered least from time and the outrage of barbarians, faces the west. Before it, is a long sphynx avenue. The dimensions of the gate are forty feet in width, sixty in height, and forty-eight in thickness at the foundation. This gate, so massy as to ap-

pear indestructible, is in the rustic style without hieroglyphics, and magnificent in simplicity. Through this we enter the grand court, on two of the sides of which there are terraces, eighty feet in width, and raised six feet above the ground. Along these are two beautiful colonnades. Beyond, is the second court which leads to the temple, and, by its extent, equals the majesty of the building. It is likewise embellished by a double colonnade; each column is above fifty feet in height, and eighteen in circumference at the base. Their capitals are in the form of a vase, over which a square stone is laid, which probably served as a pedestal for statues. Two prodigious colossal figures, mutilated by violence, terminate these colonnades.

" From this point the astonished eye surveys the temple, the height of which is most surprising, in all its immensity. Its walls of marble appear everlasting. Its roof, which rises in the centre, is sustained by eighteen rows of columns. Those standing under the most lofty part are thirty feet in circumference, and eighty in height: the others are one third less. The world does not contain a building, the character and grandeur of which more forcibly impress ideas of awe and majesty: it seems adequate to the lofty notions the Egyptians had formed of

the Supreme Being; nor can it be entered or beheld but with reverence."*

The ingenious writer, after this account of the TEMPLE, proceeds to describe the adjoining PALACE of LUXORE; but that venerable pile, from his account seems to be greatly altered since the period when Pococke visited it; and is rapidly hastening to a total decay. The extent of ground on which this splendid palace stood, is represented to be very spacious as well as its courts, "which are entered under porticoes supported by columns forty feet high, without estimating the ample base buried under the sand. Pyramidal majestic gates, abounding in hieroglyphics; the remains of walls, built with flags of granite, and which the barbarity of men only could overturn; rows of colossal marble figures, forty feet high, one-third buried in the ground; all declare what the magnificence of the principal edifice, the site of which is known by a hill of ruins, must have been. But nothing can give a more sublime idea of its grandeur than the two obelisks with which it was embellished, and which seems to have been placed there by giants or the genii of romance. They are each a solid block of granite, seventy-two feet high above the surface,

* Savary, on Egypt, vol. ii. p. 41.

and thirty-two in circumference; but, being sunk deep in the sand and mud, they may well be supposed ninety feet from the base to the summit; the one is split towards the middle; the other is perfectly preserved. The hieroglyphics they contain, divided into columns, and cut in bas-reliefs, projecting an inch and a half, do honour to the sculptor. The hardness of the stone has preserved them from being injured by the air. Nothing in the whole circle of art can be more awfully majestic than these obelisks."*

In considering the prodigious structures of the Thebais, we ought not to have passed, unnoticed, the stately portico of ACHMOUNAIN, of which a beautiful engraving is given by Pococke, but of which M. Savary's account, being more ample as well as more recent, is here inserted.

"Four miles north of Melaoui is Achmounain, remarkable for its magnificent ruins. Among the hills of rubbish, that surround it, is a stately portico, little injured by time, a hundred feet long, twenty-five feet wide, and supported by twelve columns, the capital of which is only a small cord. Each is composed of three blocks of granite, forming, together, a portico of sixty feet in height, and twenty-four

* Savary's Letters on Egypt, vol. ii. p. 45.

in circumference. The block, next the base, is merely rounded, and loaded with hieroglyphics, the line of which begins by a pyramid; the two others are fluted. The columns are ten feet distant, except the two in the centre, which form the entrance, and have an interval of fifteen feet. Ten enormous stones cover the portico in its whole extent, and these are surmounted by a double row; the two in the centre, which rise with a *triangular* front, surpass the others in grandeur and thickness. The spectator is astonished at beholding stones, or rather rocks, so ponderous, raised sixty feet high by the art of man. The surrounding frieze abounds with hieroglyphics, well sculptured, containing figures of birds, insects, various animals, and men seated, to whom others appear to present offerings. This, probably, is the history of the time, place, and god, in whose honour this monument was erected. The portico was painted red and blue, which colours are effaced in many places; but the bottom of the architrave round the colonnade has preserved a gold colour surprisingly bright. The ceiling, also, contains stars of gold sparkling in an azure sky with dazzling brilliancy. This monument, raised before the Persian conquest, has neither the elegance nor purity of Grecian

architecture; but its indestructible solidity, venerable simplicity, and majesty, extort, at once, astonishment and admiration."*

The portico of Dendera, also, the ancient Tentyra, of which an engraving is presented to the reader on the same plate with the perspective view of Elephanta in the former portion of this work, is too stupendous an edifice not to attract the attention of him who wanders, in solitary contemplation, amidst the ruins of the Thebais. It is thus described by the celebrated Paul Lucas, who travelled through Egypt about the commencement of the last century, and found, like Tavernier, a noble patron in Louis the Fifteenth; one of a race of kings, who, whatever might be their political errors, for many centuries encouraged genius and merit by the most munificent rewards; and whose total degradation therefore from imperial sway, grateful science cannot behold without a sigh! "Having walked," says M. Lucas, "for some time among the ruinous heaps of stones and marbles, I perceived at a distance a large and extremely beautiful building; and, going up to it, I was astonished to see a work which might justly have been accounted one of the wonders of the world. I came first to the back part of this

* Savary's Letters on Egypt, vol. i. p. 451.

edifice, which was a great wall, without any windows, constructed of large stones of granite marble, of a dark colour, and entirely filled with bas-reliefs, larger than life, representing THE ANCIENT DEITIES OF EGYPT, WITH ALL THEIR ATTRIBUTES, IN DIFFERENT ATTITUDES;" and for this reason I have had it engraved on the same plate with the Elephanta sculptures, representing the deities of India with their respective attributes. "Two lions of white marble, thicker than horses, in half relief, are sculptured on this wall. Hence I passed along the other side, which is likewise full of bas-reliefs, and hath two lions as large, and situate like the former, at the distance of about 300 paces, till at length I came to the grand front of this stately fabric. Here I saw a vestibule, in the middle of the front, supported by vast square pilasters. A magnificent peristyle, supported by three rows of columns, which eight men together could scarcely embrace, extends itself on both sides the vestibule, and supports a flat roof made of stones six or seven feet broad, and of an extraordinary length. The ceiling of this roof was once painted; for there still remain strong marks of the colours. The columns are made of vast masses of granite marble, and charged with hieroglyphics in bas-relief; each

has its chapiter, composed of four women's heads, with their head-dress, placed back to back, so that the four faces appear like those of Janus." They are, doubtless, the four heads of Isis Omnia, alluding, like the four heads of Brahma, who is ALL THAT IS, AND ALL THAT EVER WAS, to the four elements, and the four quarters of the world. M. Lucas proceeds; "These heads are of a size proportionate to the thickness of the columns. Upon them there rests a square base, made of one stone, about six feet high, rather longer than represented on the plate, illustrative of this ruin. A kind of cornice of a singular, but not inelegant fashion runs all along this peristyle, and terminates what remains of this palace. There are, over the middle portico, two large dragons, folded together, and resting their heads on vast wings stretched out on both sides of them. Although these columns are so deeply buried in the ruins that only one half of them appears, yet we may judge of their height by their circumference; and, according to the exact rules of architecture, their shafts were fifty-five or sixty feet high, and the whole columns, with the chapiter and base, above one hundred." The ornament, which our author describes on the front of the portico, and which invariably decorates that of

all the Egyptian temples, is the celebrated Hemptha, or Egyptian Trinity; for, he might have added, that in the middle of it was the ORB, or GLOBE, out of which the serpents and the wings proceed. I have observed before, that, by the dragon, the ancients only meant a large serpent. Lucas seems to have been misled, by the wings that shadow them, to call them dragons; but the wings, in fact, issue with the serpents from the central orb.

Before we entirely quit Luxore for the regions nearer the source of the Nile, there is one circumstance peculiarly deserving of consideration, and which has attracted the notice as well of M. Lucas as of a late very celebrated investigator of Egyptian Antiquities, M. De Pauw. The reader may remember that the artist, employed by Governor Boon to take copies of the sculptures at Salsette, plainly traced on many of the statues the paint and gilding with which they were anciently decorated. The same species of decoration is still more conspicuously visible on the temples and statues of Thebes, and these united circumstances remarkably corroborate the conjecture offered towards the close of the first part of the preceding volume of Dissertations, that they are only relicks of ancient Chaldæan idolatry, the idols of which appear,

from the picturesque description of them there cited from Ezekiel, to have been sculptured and adorned in a manner strikingly similar. M. De Pauw, in his treatise entitled Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, is of opinion that the art of painting flourished in Upper Egypt in high perfection in very remote æras, and that, from the very remaining traits of the vivid colouring, it is evident that they must have understood the art of making their colours brilliant and durable in a manner unknown to their posterity.

As we ascend still higher that rich magazine of buried treasures, the Thebaïs of Egypt, in quest of a few other remarkable antiquities, more immediately connected with our subject, and as we pass along the winding shore of the Nile, let us not forget that, like the Gnges, its waves are HALLOWED by the superstitious natives. They call the Nile, says Mr. Volney, "holy, blessed, sacred; and, on the appearance of every fresh inundation, that is, on the opening of the canals, mothers are seen plunging their children into the stream, from a belief that these waters have a purifying and divine virtue."* The Ganges, we have observed from the Ayeen Akbery, flows from the hair of Veeshnu;

* Volney's Travels in Egypt and Syria, vol. i. p. 19.

and the Nile is said, in the often-cited treatise of Plutarch, to be the efflux of Osiris, who is at once the great principle of moisture, signified by his floating like Brahma on the leaf of the lotos in water, and the source of fecundity, typified by the prolific PHALLUS, as Seeva, in India, is by the generative LINGAM.

SECTION III.

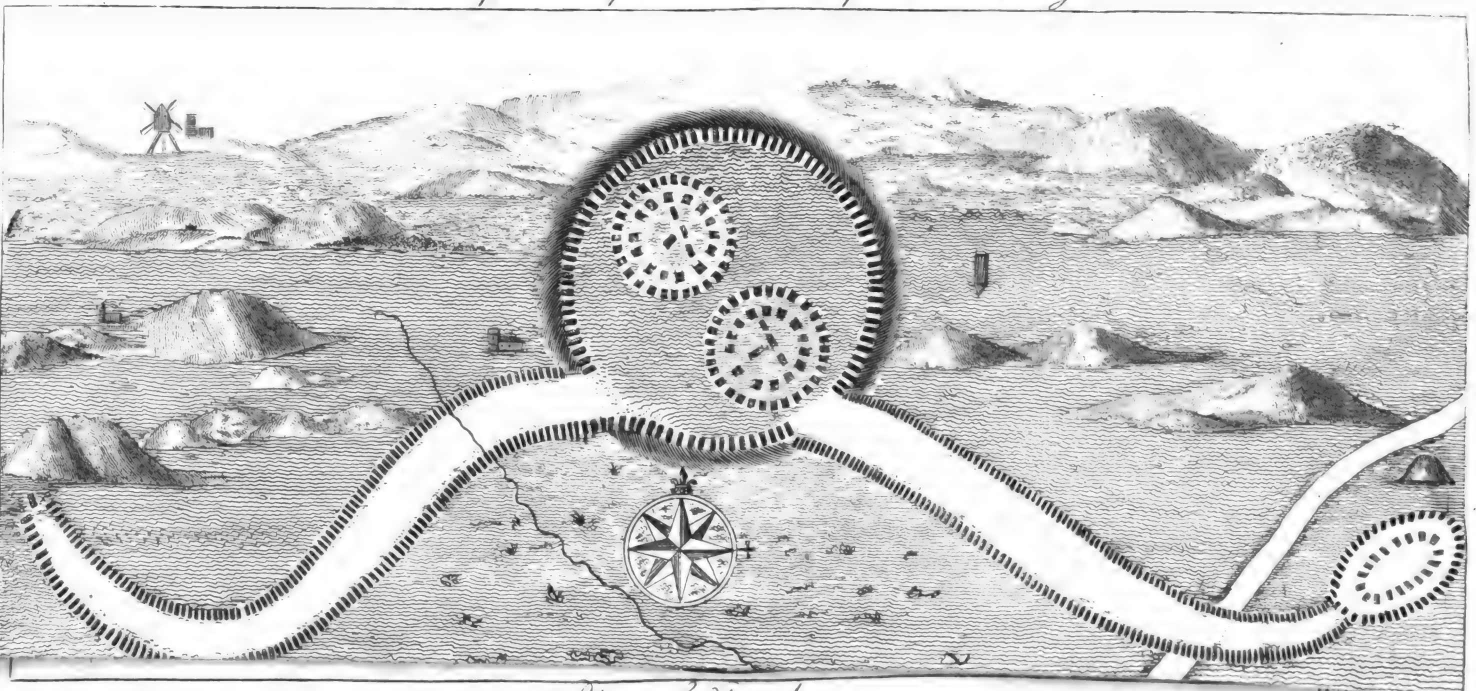
In this Section the Origin and Progress of ARCHITECTURE *are considered principally as that Science has Reference to and is connected with the astronomical and mythological Notions of the Ancients.—In the Course of it is detailed the History of the* FOUR GRECIAN ORDERS; *and accurate Descriptions are given of the most celebrated Temples of Greece, compared, in their Designs and symbolical Decorations, with those of Egypt and India.*

IT would be unnecessary for us to ascend the Nile beyond Luxore, were it not for the sake of still farther illustrating my assertion relative to the wonderful feature of similarity, I mean in point of grandeur and form, that prevails in the ARCHITECTURE of those two most celebrated empires of the ancient world, Egypt and India. Raised in the infancy of science, the stupendous edifices of the Thebais have now for above 3000 years, withstood the raging elements and

the violence of corroding time. Sublime in native majesty, they tower above the boldest efforts of every succeeding race of mortals to rival them; and, while they fill us with awe and reverence, excite in us the utmost astonishment, that it was possible for mankind in the dawn of the arts to raise fabrics at once so lofty and so durable. Oriental ARCHITECTURE is deeply connected with Oriental HISTORY, since it was an immemorial custom throughout all the East for the captives, taken in battle, to be employed by the victor in erecting fabrics, the sculptured walls of which recorded his triumphs, while its costly decorations announced to posterity his riches and magnificence. The hieroglyphic sculptures on the sepulchral temple of Sesostris are direct proofs of this assertion. Some of the finest edifices of Persia were raised after the demolition of the Egyptian temples by Cambyses. Alexander, on his return from Persia, seems to have aimed at acquiring immortality by his stupendous efforts in architecture; and the barbarian Timur, in later periods, enriched the imperial city of Samarcand not less by the labour of Indian architects than the glittering spoils of the Indian metropolis. A retrospective history of architecture will also be useful to mark the progress of superstition, since



Plan of the Serpentine Temple at Abury.



Plan of Stonehenge.

Pridden sc.

the earliest created edifices bore impressed the marks of the reigning devotion. The subject, generally considered, opens a wide field for investigation, and I shall easily obtain the pardon of my readers for taking rather an extended review of it, for it is curious and interesting, perhaps, beyond most others in the whole range of antiquities. Let us, according to our usual method, commence our researches at the fountain-head of information; let us revert to periods, when as yet the cedar and the palm securely reared their lofty heads on the mountain, and the rude granite reposed undisturbed in the dark bosom of its native quarry.

Born in the deep shades of the forest, or nursed in the dreary solitude of caverns, which formed the first human habitations, mankind originally borrowed from them the mode of constructing houses for themselves, and erecting temples to the Deity. When chance, or necessity, led them from those lonely retreats into the open plains, they contrived huts, rudely formed of the branches of trees, of which the larger ends, set in a circular manner into the ground, and the superior extremities terminating at the top in the manner of a cone, or sugar-loaf, gave the first idea of that pyramidal form of building, which, in regard to temples, the

solar superstition afterwards consecrated and rendered permanent and universal during many ages of barbarity and ignorance. Till then the human race, however exalted by the distinguishing and godlike attribute of reason, had not disdained to associate with the beasts of the desert; nor did they now refuse, in the infancy of science, to receive instruction from the provident martin, the swallow, and other feathered tenants of the woods, from which they issued, filling up the interstices of their brittle habitations with leaves and clay mingled together. Pliny, indeed, expressly affirms this of them; exemplo sumpto ab hirundinum nidis;* they copied the example of the swallows in building their nests.

When mankind increased in numbers and associated in larger bodies; when they found their slender clay-fenced tenements totally unable to resist the violence of the contending elements, beaten to pieces by the driving storm, or deluged by torrents of descending rain; they formed the plan of erecting more substantial fabrics, and the solid trunks of trees were, by their increasing knowledge in mechanics, torn with violence from the earth, for the purpose of constructing, for themselves, a more secure

* Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. vii. cap. 56.

and ample abode, as well as, for the deity, a temple suitable to the grandeur of their conceptions concerning his nature and attributes. These unhewn blocks, arranged in long and regular rows, sustained an elevated roof composed of similar blocks, placed flat upon them, and longitudinally traversing each other. They contrived, however, in obedience to the reigning superstition, gradually to contract the ascending pile, and gave the summit a pyramidal form. I am afraid that even at this day, after so many ages have elapsed, the vestige of the first grand superstition, so general in the ancient æras of the world, is too apparent in the lofty spires and pinnacles with which the sacred edifices of Europe are decorated.

The genial warmth and nutrition bestowed by the beam of the Sun led mankind first to adore him, not merely, I firmly believe, as the brightest of the orbs, but as the noblest symbol in the universe of that *ἀγνωστος Θεος*, that unknown God, to whom the Athenians erected an altar, and of whom all memory and tradition was never wholly effaced from the human mind. The lofty obelisk and spiral column, symbolical of that beam, shot up in every region where mankind increased, and the temples of Mexico, as may be seen in the annexed engraving, not

less than the fanes of Egypt, assumed the form of his all-vivifying ray. In succeeding ages, FIRE, and the other elements, of which their rapid advance in physical knowledge led them to explore the latent and wonderful properties, upon similar principles, received a kindred homage. The form of the sacred edifice varied with their varying theology, and temples were now erected of a quadrangular fashion, as well from their veneration of the four elements, which began so universally to receive the homage of superstition, as in allusion to the four cardinal points of that universe, the system of which they began more accurately to comprehend. The pyramids of Egypt, built with such astronomical precision as to front the four quarters of the world, and the quadrangular pagoda, with its lofty pyramidal gateways, exhibited in the former portion of this work, are remarkable instances of the union of these two predominant notions in the ancient systems of theology; and the period in which the former were erected, could it be ascertained, might possibly point out the precise æra in which they were first blended together in that system.

In these public erections for the performance of the national worship, the piety of the old

Egyptians singularly manifested itself; for, it is very remarkable that nearly all the ancient accounts of the astonishing splendour and magnificence displayed in their buildings are wholly to be considered as referring to the temples of the gods and to sepulchral edifices. The former, their sublime notions concerning the Deity and his attributes, taught them it was impossible to erect in a style too costly; and, with respect to the latter, Diodorus Siculus informs us, they paid little attention to the building and decoration of their domestic habitations, for they esteemed *them* only as inns in which their residence was transitory; but *the sepulchres of the dead* they considered as everlasting habitations, and therefore bestowed upon them all the decorations of art and an unbounded profusion of expence.*

It was impossible for astronomy not to have had great influence with the ancients in forming the plans of their buildings, but especially their temples, because, upon that astronomy was principally founded the basis of the popular superstition. In the course of the extensive astronomical disquisitions, into which it will be absolutely necessary for me to enter hereafter, in order to render the ancient Sanscreet history

* Diod. Sic. lib. i. cap. 4, p. 156.

of Hindostan intelligible, I shall have various opportunities of evincing how deeply their physical, and especially their sidereal, speculations regulated their proceedings in this point. Two or three instances of this kind only shall be here particularized from the two most ancient and authentic historians, Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus.

In the extensive and beautiful plains of CHALDÆA, I have before observed, astronomy probably had its birth, and on those plains were certainly made the first accurate celestial observations. According to Pliny, "Belus inventor fuit sideralis scientiæ:"* that is, Belus first collected together and reduced into a system the scattered observations of the astronomers of his time, and those handed down by tradition from the preceding race and his ante-diluvian ancestors; for, there can be little doubt but that mankind, struck with the beauty and splendour of the heavenly bodies, soon after the creation began to count their number and observe their motions. The conjecture is by no means improbable, that *one* intention of erecting that immense PYRAMID, the tower of Babel, was with a view to render it, what the pyramids of Egypt in succeeding ages were doubtless in

* Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. i. cap. xxvi. Aldi edit.

part intended to be, stupendous theatres for such astronomical observations, as their limited acquaintance with the principles of that science enabled them to make. The walls of the great Babylon itself are said by Diodorus Siculus to have been built by Semiramis of the extent of 360 furlongs, to mark the number of the days of the ancient year.* If that historian may be credited, the *future invader of India* employed in that vast undertaking no less than two millions of men, and one stadium was erected every day till the whole was completed within the period of that year, the length of which the measure of their circumference was intended to represent. In justice to Diodorus, it should be added, that he professes to take this account from Ctesias; for, he subjoins, that, in Alexander's time, those walls were in circuit 365 furlongs; a circumstance, however, which by no means destroys the credit of the first account. It rather serves as an additional testimony of the great attention of the ancients to astronomical inquiries, since it is most probable, that, when they had more accurately fixed the duration of the solar year, the circuit of the city walls was, by some succeeding sovereign, enlarged, that the number of furlongs might

* Diod. Sic. book i. p. 120, 121. Edit. Rhodomani.

exactly correspond with the aggregate amount of the days added to the ancient year.

There is another very extraordinary instance, recorded by Herodotus, of the speculations of astronomy influencing the architectural designs of the sovereigns of the ancient world, which is exceedingly to my present purpose, but withal is so strongly tinctured with the *marvellous*, that I scarcely dare to insert it. I cannot however avoid laying it before the reader, who will credit the whole relation as a fact, or reject it as a fable, in proportion as he may entertain a high or inferior degree of esteem for that historian. The palace, erected by Dejoces, according to this writer, the first king of the Medes, in the great city of Ecbatana, was situated upon an eminence, the sloping declivities of which were surrounded by *seven* circular walls, one beyond the other, and the outermost of such prodigious extent as to be sixty stadia in circumference. Here it is deserving of notice, that *sixty* was a famous astronomical period in all systems of Asiatic astronomy. Hence it was, that it became afterwards so important in all their chronological calculations; it particularly attracts our notice in the great sexagenary cycle of China, and is, Sir William Jones informs us, the usual divisor of time among the Indians. These seven walls,

doubtless intended by their number and their decorations to designate the seven planets, rose gradually one above the other on the ascent of the hill, so that the battlements of each appeared distinctly over those of the next in order; those battlements were entirely painted over with various colours: the first was white from the basis of the battlement, the second was black, the third was stained of a purple colour, the fourth was of sky-blue, and the fifth of a deep orange; but the two innermost walls were most gloriously decorated, for the battlements of that nearest the palace were covered with burnished gold, and the next to it with plates of silver. That the sun was symbolized by the circular wall of gold, and the moon by that adorned with silver, cannot possibly be doubted, when we consider, that in the cave of Mithra, first instituted in the Median mountains, the orbs of the sun and moon were formed of these metals, and that the chemist at this day designates these planets by the same colours: nor can we hesitate to pronounce that the planets, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, were in like manner intended to be typified by the remaining walls, respectively adorned with white, black, purple, blue, and orange, although the reason of their using those particular tints

may not be so immediately apparent.* But if this account of Herodotus be true, it seems to evince, that the ancients had the knowledge of the true or Pythagorean system of the universe, which places the sun in the centre, 700 years before the birth of Christ, the period when Dejoces flourished, and *demonstrates* in what region, viz. the higher Asia; and of what venerable race of sages, I mean the philosophers of the old Chaldean, Persian, and Brahmanian, schools Pythagoras obtained those profound stores of knowledge which rendered him so illustrious in Greece, and have crowned his name with such deserved immortality. Although the colours, above enumerated, are not exactly the colours of the different planets, as marked down by modern astronomers, yet the circumstance of their being thus denoted, proves that they had so nicely observed their aspects as to have distinguished a variety in the colour of the light *of all of them*; a variety scarcely discernable, but by the nicest inspection, except in the instance of the ruddy Mars. The real colours of the remaining planets are stated by Huygens and other astronomers, to be as follows: the orb of Saturn has a bluish cast, and it is remarkable that Sani is thus depicted by the

* Herodoti lib. i. p. 47. Edit. Stephani.

Indians; Jupiter appears of pure white; Venus, however brilliant, is not without a tinge of yellow; and Mercury is marked by dazzling radiance tinged with light blue.

We come now to consider the style of the columns of the ancient temples.

Trunks of trees, I have observed, rudely, if at all sculptured, placed perpendicularly, and ranged in regular rows to imitate groves, with other trunks of trees placed upon them transversely, formed the first temples. Such were the earliest columns architecture could boast; such was the most ancient unadorned roof. By degrees that roof received the impression of the graver's instrument, was adorned with stars and other sculptures, symbolical of the host of heaven; and was painted of a sapphire blue, to imitate the colour of the cloudless sky. The ponderous mis-shapen columns, also, which supported that roof, began gradually to receive the polish which art bestows, and the beauty which just proportion imparts. The wonderful fabric of man himself, according to Vitruvius,* impressed upon the first Greek architects the charms of that proportion, and the several orders originated in the contemplation and imitation of the mode adopted by the Almighty

* See Vitruvius de Architectura, lib. iv. cap. 1.

Architect himself. Taking the measure of the human foot, and finding it to be in *length* the sixth part of the *height* of the whole body of man, they fixed on that proportion for their columns, and made those of the DORIC order, the first invented, six times as high as the diameter, including the capital. The conception was in every respect accurately just; for, indeed, man may be truly denominated a noble column, of which the square base of his feet forms the pedestal; his body the shaft; his head the capital; and thence it arose that an order, having the *proportion*, *strength*, and *beauty*, of the human body, was universally introduced into the more substantial edifices of the ancients.

Such is the account which Vitruvius gives us of the origin of the first of the Grecian orders, denominated Doric, from Dorus, the son of Hellen, who erected at Argos a temple to Juno, having columns regulated by this line of proportion. The genius of Greece was distinguished by elegance; that of Egypt by magnificence. Different, however, as was the style of their architecture, there are evident outlines of all the Grecian orders in the different temples of Egypt, whither the Greeks are known successively to have travelled to improve themselves in every branch of those sciences for which the

Egyptians were so renowned. What they saw they accurately copied, they highly improved, and their writers have too succcessfully laboured to make their borrowed excellencies pass upon posterity for genuine inventions of their own. Dorus flourished about the year, before Christ, 1000; but there is scarcely a temple in Upper Egypt fabricated in so late a period. Thebes and her hundred portals, the vast labyrinth with its twelve palaces and its three thousand chambers, incrusted with sculptured marble, the great statue of Memnon, together with innumerable pyramids and obelisks of exquisite beauty scattered over the face of a country, for its prodigies of every kind the envy and wonder of the world, were at that moment standing, proud testimonies of the architectural skill of the old Egyptians. There is every reason, therefore, to think that the hypothesis, upon which the Grecian architecture was formed, was already known in Egypt, and that they were fully acquainted with, though they could not always adopt, the most exact rules of elegant proportion. But farther, when, on inspecting the superb ruins of the temples of Essnay and Komombu, (engraved in this volume,) we find them adorned with columns and capitals very nearly resembling those of their most

beautiful order; and especially when we are convinced, as we must be from history, that the Egyptians, could not have borrowed the model of them from Greece, while, on the contrary, the Greeks were deeply indebted to the Egyptians in the most important points of their theology and philosophy; the most direct evidence seems to arise that the Egyptians were the originals, and the Greeks the copyists. In fact, the stupendous and amazing edifices of the Egyptians, erected, as I before observed, in the infancy of time, and in the dawn of science, did not allow of that exact nicety of proportion which distinguishes the less majestic but more elegant Grecian Temples. The vast columns, necessary to support such immense edifices, awed the mind by their grandeur and elevation, but are not without their peculiar and characteristic graces, as may be seen in the various and correct specimens exhibited in the sixty-sixth and sixty-seventh plates of Pococke's Egypt. Undoubtedly the great difference between the Indian and Egyptian architecture and that of the Greeks is to be accounted for in the prior antiquity of the former nations, whose ancestors carried away with them, from the stupendous excavations on the heights of Caucasus and the mountains of the Thebais, their former

residence, architectural notions of the most awful and magnificent kind, impressed upon their minds by the constant contemplation of nature in her most gloomy and majestic form. Let the reader turn to Abul Fazil's account in the Ayeen Akbery, of the natural caverns in the mountains that separate Persia from India; let him read the extracts inserted in a former page, from Pococke and Norden, relative to those of the Thebais; or Ludolphus and Bruce, on the Æthiopian rock-temples; and he will not wonder at the sublime efforts in architecture of those who beheld what the sovereign architect had accomplished in this way, among those steep and rugged recesses; the immense hollows scooped by her hand out of the eternal rocks, and probably used as the first temples; the vast arches by which mountains of granite were united; and the colossal columns that supported those arches, whose broad base seems to be fixed, as it were, in the centre of the earth. The Greeks, in the lesser Asia, accustomed to no such awful objects in nature, aimed to charm the beholder by the beauty and elegance of their buildings rather than to astonish by the grandeur of design and by stupendous elevation. The less daring genius of that nation, as well in their domestic as sacred edifices, led them to

imitate nature in her humbler rather than her magnificent walk; to copy the exquisite workmanship of her plastic hand in the arbour of twining jessamine, and the bower of fragrant myrtle, rather than the lofty grove of the aspiring cedar and widely-branching fir. It must still, however, be owned that the Greeks, in their architecture, sometimes rose to the true sublime; since nothing in all Egypt, or indeed, in all antiquity, could possibly exceed the bold magnificence evinced in the design, or the exquisite beauty in the execution, of those three grand temples, described so minutely by Pausanias; the temple of Jupiter Olympius, at Athens; that of the great Diana at Ephesus; and that of Apollo at Delphi.

It is this massy solidity, in the style of their buildings, that forms the principal feature of similitude between the Indian and Egyptian architecture. The columns in the caverns of Elephanta are probably the oldest and most massy in the world. They are not indeed lofty, because the immense incumbent mountain above forbade it. This vast excavation from the living rock it seems to have been the intention of the fabricators to form stupendous in length and breadth rather than height; and astonished indeed must every beholder be to

find any where such an excavation, and so superbly decorated, nearly 120 feet square! The form of the pillars was dictated by the consideration of the immense rock they sustain above: but their proportions are well preserved, and both the columns and the capitals are fluted like those of Thebes and Persepolis. The Indian capitals, we have observed from Mr. Hunter, "have the appearance of a cushion pressed flat by the weight of the superincumbent mountain;" and it is remarkable, that some of the most ancient Egyptian columns, engraved in Pococke's 66th plate, have this swelling towards the summit: he himself observes, "that it is possible this sort of swelling, inverted, might give rise to the first capitals made in the shape of a bell."* Again, Mr. Hunter observes, that, over the tops of these columns, there runs a ridge, cut out of the rock, resembling a beam; and Pococke informs us, that, over the capitals of the pillars, the Egyptians laid square stones, forming an architrave, which traversed the whole breadth of the building, to give it a lighter air; and often upon them a second tier of square stones was placed,

* Pococke's Egypt, vol. I. p. 216.—Pococke, I conceive, is here mistaken; it was the calix of the lotos the Egyptians meant to imitate.

which traversed the room longitudinally, and made it appear still higher.* He refers us, for a specimen of this mode of fabricating the roof, to his print of Komombu, of which, as it is engraved in this volume, the reader may form his own judgment, and compare with the square stones that longitudinally traverse the roof of the Elephanta pagoda, engraved in a former volume. On the whole, then, the pillars of Egypt are fluted and clustered like the Indian columns. They are alike massy, yet not ungraceful, in their form; they have a similar swell towards the summit, and they are equally decorated with the sacred lotos.

In returning from caverns to the consideration of grove temples, and of the columns more immediately imitative of the trees that formed those groves, it is proper to remark, that some particular trees, for reasons principally to be found in physical researches, were considered by the ancients in a light peculiarly sacred. Among these in Egypt, the palm-tree ranked highest; and, for this reason, that species of tree was most frequently used in the sacred buildings of that country, as indeed they afterwards were in those of the Hebrews; I do not say for the same cause: for that was connected

* Pococke's Travels, vol. i. p. 71.

with the Sabian idolatries, which the latter were taught to detest. The real source of the veneration of the former for palm-trees, and of the general cultivation of that plant in Egypt, which abounded with noble groves of them, is alledged to have been the following:—They thought the palm-tree, which is affirmed by Porphyry to bud every month in the year, a most striking emblem of the MOON, from whose twelve annual revolutions those months are formed. Whether or not there be any truth in this affirmation, I am not naturalist enough to know; but it has been remarked by Pococke, that many of the most ancient pillars in the Egyptian temples "bear great resemblance to palm-trees, and that their capitals are made in imitation of the top of that tree, when all the lower boughs are cut off:* and possibly," he adds, "the palm-trees said to be cut in Solomon's temple, might be only pillars, or at least pilasters of this kind." In his plate of Egyptian PILLARS may be seen various columns of this description, and a very remarkable one belonging to the temple of Carnack. Several of the CAPITALS also in the following plate bear an evident similitude to the expanded top of trees with their branching foliage cut off or compressed.

* Pococke's Egypt, vol. i. p. 127.

Since I have mentioned the Doric order, as originating in the proportion of a man's body, the curiosity of the reader, not versed in this science, may perhaps be gratified by being informed, from the same author, that the order, to which the Greeks gave the name of Ionic, owed its existence to an enraptured contemplation of the delicate and beautiful proportions of the female form; for, of this order, it is the established maxim, that the diameter be exactly one-*eighth* part of the height of the whole column. Our author adds, that the base of this column was made in the manner of a coiled rope, to imitate, in some measure, the ornamental dress of the feet in those days; that the volutes on the capitals, were intended to represent the head attire and graceful ringlets of curled hair hanging on each side of the face; and that the shafts were fluted to imitate the plaits of their flowing robes. Here, it is to be feared, the Grecian artist again indulged too much the vanity of a nation, whose ambition it was to be thought the sole inventors of all arts and sciences; for, long before the Pelasgic colonies had emerged from barbarism, the beautiful columns in the temple of Isis, at Philaë, were adorned with the head and plaited hair of that goddess, as may be seen in Pococke. The

volutes, a part of architecture more generally supposed to be thus formed in imitation of the twisted bark of trees, are to be seen on most of the capitals of Egyptian columns; and the pillars of Elephanta and Persepolis were *fluted*, when as yet probably no plaited robes were made to decorate the elegant form of the Grecian matron.

But let us consider the last of the three celebrated orders of Greece, (for, with the Italic orders, called the Tuscan and Composite, we have no concern,) an order which, doubtless, in airy elegance exceeds them all, and savours more than any of the others of the refined taste and purity of Grecian architecture. The ac count which Vitruvius gives of the origin of this order and its capital is both curious and interesting. The Ionic column, we have observed, was fabricated after the model of strength and symmetry exhibited in the human frame in general; the Ionic, to represent the graceful proportions and delicacy of the female form; but in the elegant Corinthian, that harmony and that delicacy were carried to the utmost limit of human skill to imitate, in copying the still more enchanting graces and exquisite symmetry displayed in the female form, at that age when every charm unfolds itself, and beauty beams

forth in its full perfection. The distinguishing feature of this order, in which the diameter is one-*tenth* part of the height of the whole column, is its noble elevation; and its possessing greater elegance with undiminished strength. The invention of its rich and ornamented capital is attributed, by Vitruvius, to the following accident.—A young Corinthian female, who was on the point of marriage, fell sick and died. Full of affection and compassion, the nurse, under whose tender care she had been brought up, hurried to the tomb of departed beauty, and placed upon it a basket, containing some vases filled with the flowers of acanthus, which the dear deceased had valued during her life, and which had been cherished by her fostering hand. To preserve from the injury of the weather those tender plants which adorned the untimely grave of the young bride, she covered the basket with a tile, through the extremities of which in the ensuing spring, when vegetation was renewed, the stalks and leaves of the growing plants forced themselves; but, being kept down by the weight of the tile, assumed a form similar to the sweeps of the volutes in architecture. Callimachus, a famous sculptor of that age, whom, for the delicacy with which he wrought in marble, the Athenians called Catatechnos,

passing by the tomb, admired the manner in which the flower encompassed the basket, and immediately formed, after that model, the capital of the Corinthian column.—The story is very elegant, and not improbable; but it should not be forgotten, that the columns of Essnay and Komombu, engraved in this volume, in their elevation and form, bear a great resemblance to those of the Corinthian order; and that the cup, or vase, of the majestic lotos had long before formed the capital of Egyptian columns, as may be seen on the large plate of Egyptian capitals, engraved in Norden.* Dr. Pococke inclines to adopt the opinion above hazarded in regard to the Egyptians giving the Greeks the first outlines of the Corinthian order; and Mr. Knight, who saw very deeply into the physics both of the Egyptians and the Greeks, and traced their mythology in their structures, speaks to the same purpose in the following decided manner: "By comparing the columns, which the Egyptians formed in imitation of the Nelumbo plant with each other, and observing their different modes of decorating them, we may discover the origin of that order of architecture, which the Greeks called Corinthian, from the place of its *supposed*

* See his Travels, vol. i. p. 215.

invention. We first find the plain bell, or seed-vessel, used as a capital, without any farther alteration than being expanded at bottom, to give it stability. In the next instance, the same seed vessel is surrounded by the leaves of some other plant, which is carved in different capitals, according to the different meanings intended to be expressed by these additional symbols. The Greeks decorated it in the same manner with the leaves of the acanthus and other sorts of foliage; while various other symbols of their religion were introduced as ornaments on the entablature, instead of being carved upon the walls of the cell or shafts of the columns." The intelligence conveyed in the following sentence is extremely curious, and well deserving the attention of the artist: "One of these ornaments, which occurs most frequently, is that which the architects call the HONEY-SUCKLE, but which, as Sir Joseph Banks clearly shewed me, must be meant for the young shoots of this plant, viewed horizontally, just when they have burst the seed-vessel, and are upon the point of sallying out of it."*

* See Mr. Knight's curious inedited book on the Phallic Worship of the Ancients, p. 92. The reader will find, in a future page of this volume, a full account of the lotos and its wonderful properties.

Lucus, the Roman appellation for a grove, is by Servius, thought to be derived *a lucendo*, from the fires that were kept perpetually burning in the central recesses of the sacred grove. The sun was never permitted to shine on the consecrated fires: they were therefore cherished in the deepest and inmost shades of those sylvan retreats; shades so thick and closely interwoven, as to be impenetrable to his beams. Thus, in the sacred edifices, fabricated in succeeding ages to resemble those groves, that part, which might more properly and emphatically be called the temple, that most holy place of worship, into which the priests, bearing the propitiary oblations and recapitulating the wishes of the suppliant populace without, alone had permission to enter, was the interior adytum, or sanctum sanctorum, where the Deity in person was supposed to reside, and where the sacred fire, his purest symbol, was eternally cherished. This adytum too was either in the centre or in the inmost recess: and the other parts of the building, the lofty porticoes, the surrounding aisles, and the majestic columns, were only splendid adjuncts to increase the pomp of public devotion, and inspire the mind with religious awe and holy horror. To demonstrate this in regard to temples, formed to

resemble groves, (for those formed more immediately in imitation of the ancient cavern-temples, dedicated to the MITHRAIC superstition, and symbolical of the world fabricated by Mithra, will engage our consideration afterwards) it will be necessary to attend to the general form, arrangement and decorations, of the former class. To investigate more fully this curious subject, we must, for a short period, relinquish the regions of the higher Asia and Egypt for a more westerly clime, and consult the beautiful productions of the Greek and Roman classics.

Vitruvius describes the ancients as not less attentive to the situation, than to the elegant construction, of their temples. In choosing that situation, the quality and attributes of the Deity were always scrupulously regarded. Thus, to the supreme gods, Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, and tutelar deities of cities, temples were erected on lofty eminences, commanding an ample prospect of those cities. To Mercury, the god of traffic, temples were built in the spacious forum, and near the emporium of commerce. Apollo, the god of poetry, and Bacchus, the festive god, had their temples near the theatre, that alternately resounded with mirth and song. The robust Hercules, immortal by the labours

he endured, had his temple near the circus, where the public games were celebrated; or the amphitheatre, where the athletic exercises were taught, and gladiators combated. The temple of Venus was placed without the walls of the city, lest by her libidinous rites the morals of youth might be corrupted, and the chaste matron seduced. Those of Mars and Vulcan were also placed without the walls; that of the former god to prevent every occasion of civil dissention, that of the latter to guard against the danger of the fires that perpetually blazed on his numerous altars. Even in the article of the order of architecture that distinguished the columns of those temples, the same circumstance was attended to; for instance, the strong Doric order was allotted to the temples of deities, renowned for valour, and delighting in war; as Mars, Minerva, and Hercules. To deities, whose attributes were delicacy, beauty, and tenderness, as Venus, Flora, the Muses, and the Graces, they assigned the elegant Corinthian order; while to Juno, Diana, Bacchus, and other deities, distinguished neither by peculiar austerity nor softness, they consecrated the Ionic order, in which is preserved a happy medium between the two others. But, farther than this, to the form of their temples thus erected

they paid no less attention than to the order and situation of them. For reasons before adduced, some were pyramidal, some quadrangular, and some oval and circular. Of this latter kind were all those dedicated to the sun, moon, and planets, whose orbs continually revolve in vast circles. To Vesta, also, whether considered as the element of earth or fire, they built circular temples; and to Jupiter, when considered as the personified æther, they raised temples exactly after the manner of the Indian pagoda, engraved in the former volume, uncovered in the centre, and surrounded with porticoes. That species of Hindoo temple, it is natural from analogy to suppose, was originally erected in honour of EENDRA, the Hindoo Jupiter and Divespiter, or god of the firmament.

We come now to consider, in a general manner, the arrangement and decorations of the ancient temples, externally and internally; I say in a general manner, because, as I am not writing a regular history of architecture, there is no occasion in this place to enter into all the minutiæ of technical description. The most celebrated temples of the ancient world were of the style the ancients called PERIPTERES, from περι, *circum*, and πτερων, *a wing*; for this species

of temples had wings on all the four sides, composed of a series of insulated columns, extending quite round the external part of the edifice. Of the peripteres there were two kinds, the *dipteres*, which had double wings, or ranges of columns; and the *pseudo-dipteres*, from which the internal range of columns was taken away, and which kind of temple Vitruvius honours with a very high encomium, as the invention of Hermogenes, who, by this means, enlarged the portico, and gave it both airiness and elegance. Among the great variety of distinctions in ancient architecture, I shall only mention two other kinds of sacred fabric, as being more immediately connected with the subject of Oriental history, that which they denominated MONOPTERIC, and that called HYPÆTHRON. The Monoptere was a circular edifice without walls, having a dome supported by columns, and was, doubtless the invention of Zoroaster, or some ancient zealous fire-worshipper of Persia, to preserve the consecrated flames that glowed on their altars from being extinguished by the violence of rain and tempests. The Hypæthron, a word formed of υπο, *sub*, and αιθρα, *the air*, was, on the contrary, a circular edifice, or portico, supported by two rows of columns, one raised above the other, and without any dome. On

the front of the temple was usually placed a colossal statue of the deity to whom it was dedicated; and the gate, in general, though not universally, was placed at the West end, that the aspect of the worshipper, on his entrance, might immediately be directed towards the East quarter, where the statues of the deity were placed, and whence, as from the region of the rising sun, the propitious god might seem to look down with smiles upon the prostrate adorer.

The sacred edifices of antiquity had in common three grand divisions, the part called the anti-temple; the *ναος*, or temple itself, which was the same as the nave of modern churches; and the adytum, or penetrale, into which, as before observed, all ingress was forbidden to the profane vulgar. The columns within the temples were arranged to correspond as much as possible in manner and number with those without. The most celebrated temple at Rome, that of Jupiter Capitolinus, formed in the dipteric fashion, will serve as an exemplar to direct and to gratify our inquiries. It is very remarkable that this grand edifice was dedicated to the three deities, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. These august personages, honoured with joint worship, as Bishop Horsley has justly observed,

formed the TRIAD of the Roman capitol. They had three chapels, or sanctuaries, erected in the inmost part of the temple; the whole length of which, according to Nardini, cited by Mountfaucon as the most accurate delineator, was two hundred feet, and the whole breadth, including the two ranges of external columns that formed the wings, was one hundred and eighty-five feet. Through the whole length of the edifice extended a double range of columns, one on each side, forming the internal aisles, or wings, of the temple, and terminating in the two chapels of Juno and Minerva, to which they respectively led; while the more spacious central avenue, which formed the nave, immediately terminated in the chapel of Jupiter, which was placed in the middle between those of the two other guardian-deities of Rome.* Vitruvius, whose ten books "de Architectura," of all those written in ancient periods upon the subject, have alone reached posterity, having been my principal guide throughout this Disquisition, I thought it proper to illustrate his positions by a survey of the principal temple of the empire in which he flourished; for, he was patronized

* Consult Mountfaucon, in the second volume of whose antiquities the plan of this temple, and those of the most famous temples of the ancient world, are exhibited.

both by Julius and Augustus Cæsar. Let us return by way of Greece to the country whose sublime edifices first gave occasion for these reflections, and consider, as we pass that celebrated region, the plan and dimensions of two of her most magnificent temples, that of Diana, at Ephesus, one of the seven wonders of the world, and that of Jupiter Olympius, at Athens.

With respect to the former, there is a circumstance recorded by Dionysius,* the geographer, which remarkably corroborates what has been previously asserted in regard to the origin of temples, viz. that the shrine of Diana at first consisted only of a niche in the hollowed trunk of a LARGE ELM, in which was placed the statue of the goddess, who, in fact, is only *the fruitful mother of all personified*, as is abundantly testified by her numerous breasts swelling with the milk of nutrition, by which universal nature is supported. Pliny describes the superb fane, which succeeded to the venerable elm of prophecy, as four hundred and twenty feet in length, and two hundred feet in breadth.†

Its vast roof was supported by one hundred and twenty-seven columns, sixty feet in height, erected by as many kings; and these columns,

* Vide Dyonisii Orbis Descriptio, p. 46.
† Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. xxxvi. cap. 14.

of which thirty-six were most richly carved, and one of them by the famous Scopas, running through the whole length of the building, served as well for its decoration as for the division of the internal parts of the fabric into the various partitions usual in ancient temples; as the aisles, the nave, and the sanctuary. This temple, according to Vitruvius, was of the Ionic order, and was likewise of the *Dipteric* kind, having two ranges of columns, in form of a double portico, extending quite round the outside of it, and the similitude which such an astonishing number of columns, both internally aud externally, must give the whole to an immense grove will be easily conceived by the reader. But, farther than this, the idea seems to have been alive in the mind of the architect; for, the inner roof was formed of *cedar*, and it had a grand stair-case which went to the very top, and which, however incredible it may appear, was formed of a single *vine-stock*. To conclude, this magnificent fabric took up two hundred years in erecting and finishing; and, in spite of the frantic act of the ambitious Erostratus, who to render himself immortal, set fire to the glorious pile, the fame of the grandeur of this august shrine will for ever flourish as well in prophane as sacred history, whose pages

unite to record the celebrity of the temple of the *great Diana of the Ephesians;* that temple, whose majestic pillars, and massy marble walls the thunder of Paul's eloquence shook to their deep foundations, and made the hireling fabricators of her *silver shrines* tremble lest her *magnificence should be destroyed;* the magnificence of *that goddess whom all Asia and the world worshipped.**

Of the temple of Olympian Jove, as well as of all the more famous Greek temples, Pausanias, in that description of Greece which his travels through the country enabled him to give with such accuracy, has bequeathed posterity a most curious, interesting, and particular account. This temple, reputed likewise one of the wonders of the world, according to the system adopted by the ancients, and intimated before, of erecting the building in a style corresponding with the qualities, sex, and function, of the deity, was of the Doric order, an order the most ancient and strong of all the three, and of that peculiar fashion called *peristyle,* from *περι, circum,* and *στυλος a column,* in which the edifice was surrounded with only a single row of columns. It was of dimensions greatly inferior to the former, being only, according to this author, 68 feet in

* Acts xix. 27.

height, 95 in breadth, and 230 in length; but within its proud walls were displayed the sculptures of Phidias, and the paintings of Panænus. From each extremity of the marble roof was suspended a large vase richly gilded and burnished; and from the centre of that roof, hung a gilded statue of Victory, and a shield of beaten gold, on which was engraved a Medusa's head, with an inscription, intimating that the temple was erected to Jupiter after a victory. Along the cornish, above the columns that surrounded the temple, hung twenty-one gilt bucklers, consecrated to Jupiter by Mummius, after the sacking of Corinth. Upon the pediment, in the front, was a colossal Jupiter, and on each side of the god were sculptured, with exquisite skill, exact and animated representations of the chariot-races in the Olympic games, with various other symbolical figures, allusive to the Greek mythology. The entrance into the temple was through gates of brass, where two ranges of columns, supporting, on each side, two lofty galleries, led to the throne and statue of Jupiter, the master-piece of Phidias. Nothing in ancient or modern times, if we except the famous peacock throne of India, could equal this beautiful and splendid pageant. Inimitable for its workmanship, this superb piece of statuary was



entirely composed of gold and ivory, artificially blended, and represented the KING OF GODS AND MEN, with a splendid crown upon his head, in which the victorious olive was imitated to perfection, sitting upon a throne, whence a profusion of gold and gems shed a dazzling radiance, and where ivory and ebony, intermixed, united to form a striking and elegant contrast. In his right hand Jupiter held a Victory composed likewise of gold and ivory; his left hand grasped a sceptre, most curiously wrought, and refulgent with all kinds of precious metals, on the top of which reposed an eagle, bearing, in his talons, the thunder-bolt of the omnipotent. The shoes and rich pallium, or mantle, of the god were of burnished gold; and, in the flowing folds of the latter, a variety of animals and flowers were richly engraved. At the four extremities of the throne were as many Victories, who were sculptured in the attitude of dancing, and each of their feet trod upon a prostrate Victory. The throne was erected upon pillars of gold, upon which, and the gorgeous pedestal, were carved all the greater divinities of Greece; and particularly Apollo, guiding the fiery chariot of day, on which Phidias had exerted the utmost powers of his wonderful art; while Panænus, in a rich assemblage of the liveliest colours, to heighten

the effect of the most glowing imagery, had displayed all the energy of the painter's genius. A rich canopy expanding above the head of Jupiter, and over his magnificent throne, was adorned by the hand of the former with representations of the HOURS and the GRACES: and on the great ballustrade that encircled the base of the whole, and guarded it from the too near approach of the numerous strangers who came to admire and adore at this sumptuous shrine, the pencil of the latter was visible in two picturesque and noble portraits, which strikingly attracted the notice of the beholder. The one, was that of Atlas, bearing on his shoulders the incumbent heavens; the other, that of Hercules, in the attitude of stooping to relieve him of the oppressive burthen. The labours of Hercules were likewise painted in a masterly manner upon the walls and roof of this temple, and those labours, as I shall hereafter demonstrate, being only allegorical histories of the progressive power of the SUN, toiling through the several signs of the zodiac, are a proof how much the Greeks also, as well as the Indians and Egyptians, were accustomed to decorate their temples with astronomical symbols.

I have been thus prolix in my account of the internal decorations of this grand temple, for

the purpose of proving in what particular line of excellence the Grecians shone superior to those nations; and that, if they did not *always* rival them in the grandeur of their designs, they never failed to exceed them in the elegance of execution. The two instances last cited, however, bear sufficient testimony that the Greeks upon some occasions could *plan* as magnificently as they could *finish* with taste and spirit; and the union of these is the perfection of the science.

Of the temple of Apollo, at Delphi, of which no particular description has reached posterity, it is sufficient for my purpose to remark that it was originally nothing but *a cavern*, from which, certain bland exhalations rising, were supposed to inspire those who approached it with a certain vivacity of spirits or enthusiastic ardour. This circumstance, in time, procured it the reputation of something divine; the inhabitants of all the neighbouring countries flocked thither to witness, or experience, the pretended miracle; and an oracular chapel was erected on the spot, which, according to Pausanias, in Phocicis, at first consisted of a *hut formed of laurel-boughs*, but which, in time, gave place to a temple the most famed for its riches and offerings, though not for magnitude, of any

in Greece, or, indeed, the world. It was remarkable for the extensive and noble grove with which it was surrounded, as indeed were most of the Grecian temples; and the practice doubtless originated in impressions left on the mind, or traditions handed down, from age to age, of those first consecrated forests, under which the awful rites of religion were celebrated in the earliest ages. Those sacred plantations, moreover, of which many were of vast circumference and depth, and through whose high embowering shades the temple of the deity was approached, added greatly to the solemnity of the place. They were considered as inviolably sacred, and served not only as a firm barrier against the intrusion of the profane upon the mysterious rites of religion, but afforded a secure asylum either for unfortunate delinquents, pursued thither by the harpies of inflexible justice, or for fugitive innocence groaning under the iron bondage of oppression. Too often, however, in after ages, it must still be owned, these holy retreats were polluted by the basest impurities; and extended an impious shelter to the most hardened and sacrilegious villains.

Returning now to the Thebais, let the reader consider the innumerable columns ranging through its temples, many of which of superior

magnitude were, like those of India, uncovered at the top: let him examine the form, position, and sylvan ornaments that decorate those columns, the azure sky and gilded stars glittering on the roof, and he will find my assertion, relative to the similitude which they universally bore to the hallowed palm-groves of the first ages, and of which there at this day remains such abundance in Egypt, (groves in which adoration was paid by day to the solar orb, and by night to the moon walking in brightness, and all the host of heaven attendant in her train,) to be fully and extensively proved. The gradations are now apparent, by which that wonderful change, from a simple grove to a superb fane was completed; and I should here conclude this part of the subject which I undertook to discuss, did not the great BANIAN-TREE of India, the noblest natural temple in the world, and the stupendous masses of stone that formed the rude temples which succeeded to the groves of the ancient Druids, offer to a writer on Indian Antiquities matter of deep investigation, and lead to consequences of the utmost historical importance. These venerable Druids, who at first tenanted the vast groves of Scythian Tartary, and spread themselves and the Indian tenets over the greatest part of Europe, I can

consider in no other light than as a race of Northern Brahmins, or at least as deeply tinctured with the doctrines of Brahma, a tribe of philophers whom they so much resembled in their temperate habits, their rigid discipline, and mysterious rites. This assertion will, doubtless, appear to most of my readers equally hazardous as it is novel, and like a determination to support at any rate a favourite hypothesis; but, till the full evidence shall be laid before them, it is hoped candour will suspend its decision, and severity withhold its censures.

Of the tree, known to Europeans by the name of BANIAN, and denominated in Sanscreet writings VATTA, or BATTA, the following description, which is authentic and well drawn up, and which attended the large plate of this tree, which I purchased for the sake of presenting my subscribers with an accurate representation of it hereafter, when I come to describe the penances of her gymnosophists, will enable them to form a judgment of its form, magnitude, and the purposes to which it has been applied in India from the remotest periods of time. It is thus described by Linnæus; FICUS INDICA LANCEOLATIS INTEGERRIMIS PETIOLATIS PEDUNCULIS AGGREGATIS RAMIS RADIOANTIBUS. "The Banian, or Indian Fig-tree, says the

writer of the printed paper alluded to, is, perhaps, the most beautiful and surprising production of nature in the vegetable kingdom. Some of these trees are of an amazing size, and, as they are always increasing, they may in some measure be said to be exempt from decay. Every branch proceeding from the trunk throws out its own roots, first in small fibres, at the distance of several yards from the ground. These, continually becoming thicker when they approach the earth, take root, and shoot out new branches, which in time bend downwards, take root in the like manner, and produce other branches, which continue in this state of progression as long as they find soil to nourish them.

"The Hindoos are remarkably fond of this tree; for, they look upon it as an emblem of the Deity, on account of its out-stretching arms and its shadowy beneficence. They almost pay it divine honours, and 'find a FANE in every GROVE.'

"Near these trees the most cebrated pagodas are generally erected: the Brahmins spend their lives in religious solitude under their friendly shade; and the natives of all casts and tribes are fond of retreating into the cool recesses and natural bowers of this umbrageous

canopy, which is impervious to the fiercest beams of the tropical sun.

"The particular tree here described grows on an island in the river *Nerbedda*, ten miles from the city of *Baroach*, in the province of *Guzzurat*, a flourishing settlement lately in possession of the East-India company, but ceded by the government of Bengal, at the treaty of peace, concluded with the Mahrattas, in 1783, to Mahdajee, a Mahratta chief.

"This tree, called in India *Cubeer Burr*, in honour of a famous saint, was much larger than it is at present; for, high floods have at different times carried away the banks of the island where it grows, and along with them such parts of the tree as had extended their roots thus far; yet what still remains is about two thousand feet in circumference, measuring round the principal stems; but the hanging branches, the roots of which have not reached the ground, cover a much larger extent. The chief trunks of this single tree amount to three hundred and fifty, all superior in size to the generality of our English oaks and elms; the smaller stems, forming into stronger supporters, are more than three thousand; and, from each of these new branches, hanging roots are proceeding, which in time will form trunks, and become parents to a future progeny.

" *Cubeer Burr* is famed thoughout Hindostan for its prodigious extent, antiquity, and great beauty. The Indian armies often encamp around it; and, at certain seasons, solemn Jattras, or Hindoo festivals, are held here, to which thousands of votaries repair from various parts of the Mogul empire. Seven thousand persons, it is said, may easily repose under its shade. There is a tradition among the natives, that this tree is three thousand years old; and there is great reason to believe it, and that it is this amazing tree which Arrian describes, when speaking of the gymosophists, in his book of Indian affairs. " These people," says he, " live naked. In winter, they enjoy the benefit of the sun's rays in the open air; and, in summer, when the heat becomes excessive, they pass their time in moist and marshy places under large trees; which, according to Nearchus, cover a circumference of five acres, and extend their branches so far that ten thousand men may easily find shelter under them."

" English gentlemen, when on hunting and shooting parties, are accustomed to form extensive encampments, and to spend several weeks under this delightful pavilion of foliage, which is generally filled with green wood-pigeons, doves, peacocks, bulbulls, and a variety of

feathered songsters; together with monkeys amusing with their droll tricks, and bats of a large size, some of which measure more than six feet from the extremity of one wing to the other. This tree not only affords shelter but sustenance to all its inhabitants; being loaded with small figs of a rich scarlet colour, on which they regale with much delight.

"Milton describes this tree in the following words, in the Ninth Book of his *Paradise Lost.*—

> So counsell'd he, and both together went
> Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose
> The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renown'd,
> But such as at this day, to Indians known,
> In Malabar and Deccan spreads her arms,
> Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
> The bending twigs take root, and daughters grow
> About the mother-tree, a pillar'd shade
> High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:
> There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
> Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
> At loop-holes cut through thickest shade."

The whole of this relation, of the authenticity of which I am assured from the high authority of Mr. Forbes, who painted the original picture from which the engraving was copied, is so direct a proof of the preceding observations, that I shall add no comment upon it, but immedi-

ately proceed to consider the imitative oak-groves and rude stone temples of their Indo-Scythian neighbours, preparatory to a disquisition, in some future page of the Indian Antiquities, upon the Indo-Druid remains existing in the British isles.

Upon the commencement of this theological dissertation, I had occason to remark, from Keysler, that the ancient Scythians performed their sanguinary sacrifices "under groves of oak of astonishing extent and of the profoundest gloom,"* and I cursorily traced the vestige of those barbarous rites in Gaul and Britain. I also instanced from Herodotus their peculiar mode of sacrificing to the rusty scimitar, the symbol of Mars, the victims taken in war; and I adduced more than one instance of similitude which the national manners of Scythia bore to those of the war-tribe of India. Without crediting all the extravagant assertions of Bailly and De Guignes, concerning the unfathomable antiquity of the primitive prototypal race of Scythia, at that remote imaginary period, *when the line of the equator passed through the middle of the vast deserts of Tartary, and made the frozen soil of Siberia fruitful*, we may safely allow that northern and martial progeny, by reiterated

* Vol. ii. p. 36.

invasion and conquests. to have influenced in some degree the habits and customs of neighbouring nations, and to have been reciprocally affected by those of the people with whom they thus accidentally communicated. This is all for which I have ever contended; nor shall I now attempt to ascertain in which region the very peculiar veneration which either nation entertained for sacred forests of immense extent originated; it is sufficient for my purpose that this very striking point of affinity anciently existed between the Tartarian and Brahmin magi. The relentless Diana of the Tauric grove was probably no other than the stern Nareda, or Cali, of the Indians. Their characters are consentaneous, and their rites accord in dreadful unison. With the Scythians, a tall and stately tree, with wide-spreading arms, was the majestic emblem of God; and though Herodotus asserts that they had temples and images, his assertion is not confirmed by any other historian of antiquity. In fact, their temples consisted only of vast heaps of colossal stones, rudely, if at all, carved; and in the most unwieldy stone, as well as in the most lofty tree, they, like the Indians, contemplated the image of that Deity, of whom, as I before observed,* their perverted

* See vol. i. p. 97.

imaginations conceived the majesty and attributes to be best represented "by gigantic sculptures and massy symbols."

On the adoration of stones, whether single, as that which Jacob anointed and *set up for his pillar, calling the place* Beth-el, that is literally *the house of God*; whether two-fold, like those which were so combined as emblematically to represent the active and passive powers of nature in the generation of all things; whether ternary, as those which were intended to shadow out the three-fold power of the Deity to create, to preserve, and to destroy (a doctrine, however, of undoubted Indian original); whether obeliscal, as those which symbolized the solar light; whether pyramidal, as those which expressively typified the column of ascending flame; or whether, finally, like the cairns of the Druids, arranged in vast circular heaps, called by the ancients Mercurial; on all these various kinds of adoration, paid, by the infatuated superstition of past ages, to the unconscious block of rude granite, M. d'Ancarville, cited by me in the page just referred to, has presented the learned world with a most elaborate dissertation, and he expressly denominates this species of worship Scythicism.*

* D'Ancarville's Preface to Récherches sur l'Origine des Arts, &c. p. 9 and 10.

These grotesque and ponderous stones were placed in the centre of their most hallowed groves, and, since Herodotus farther informs us* that the goddess Vesta was one of their principal deities, upon the description of whose rites and temples we shall immediately enter, it is most probable that they adopted the custom of other Asiatic mythologists, and placed them as, in conformity to the same worship, they were placed in the Druid-temple of Stonehenge, in a circular manner. Like those of the Persians at Persepolis, they were open at the top; for, like them, the Scythians esteemed it impious to confine the Deity who pervades all nature, and whose temple is earth and skies, within the narrow limits of a covered shrine, erected by mortal hands. Beside these temples, around which thick plantations of sacred trees were constantly cherished, there were others in the ancient world of a most stupendous magnitude, and some in the form of serpents, whose enormous folds extended over a wide tract of land, and thence called DRACONTIA. From the body of the serpent sometimes rose expanding wings, when they were called ALATE; and that body was frequently passed through an immense orb, or circle, which then exhibited that complete

* Herodoti lib. iv. p. 137.

Oriental symbol of Deity, concerning which so much will occur in the future pages of this volume, the CIRCLE, SERPENT, and WINGS. Of this kind of alate dracontine temple, the magnificent work of Abury in Wiltshire, with so much laborious accuracy traced out, and with so much learning descanted on, by the late Dr. Stukely, remained till lately a memorable instance. That structure and Stonehenge have such an immediate relation to my subject, and will so highly illustrate it, that, after hurrying to the conclusion of these strictures on Oriental Architecture, this long parallel between the Indian and Egyptian temples, I shall devote a separate chapter to the examination of a subject at once so curious and so interesting to every Briton.

I prefaced this dissertation, on the most ancient species of Oriental Architecture, by observing that consecrated groves and caverns, forming the first natural temples of the world, the earliest artificial temples erected by the skill of man, were so fabricated as to bear a striking resemblance to those groves and those caverns. Of the ancient grove-temple I have now fully considered the general external form, the particular internal arrangement, and the fashion of the decorative columns. It remains that we

consider that peculiar species of edifice which resembled the ancient cavern-temple, both in point of fabrication and the rites celebrated in them. This, in part, hath been already done; and the truth of the general assertion, that some of the ancient temples were built cavern-fashion, has been attempted to be proved in the instance of the more ancient pagodas of India. The rule, in my opinion, will equally apply to the pyramids of Egypt, though possibly intended as sepulchral temples; for, can any thing, in fact, more nearly resemble caverns than those amazing masses of stone, with their secret sequestered chambers, and the dark and winding avenues through which they are approached?

Nothing surely could be more proper for a sepulchral temple than the recess of a secret and gloomy cavern, in the bosom of that earth to which the mouldering body is consigned; and the pyramids, therefore, may be adduced as additional evidence of that assertion. But the particular cavern, to which I wish to recall the reader's attention, is the cavern of Mithra. This cavern, in which the sacred fire was kept incessantly burning, and which we have seen was symbolical of the world, fabricated by Mithra, was circular. Hence the FIRE-TEMPLE, presented to the reader in the preceding volume,

is circular also; and of this circular form, in succeeding periods, were all the temples erected in Greece to Vesta, who was nothing more than the igneous element personified; while her globular temple represented the orb of the earth, cherished and made prolific by the central fire. Her Greek name of Εϛια, which signifies fire, or rather *the blazing hearth*, and whence the Latins formed the word Vesta, is pointedly descriptive of her mythologic character, and the profound mysterious rites with which she was adored in every region of the ancient world.

Of this species of circular edifice, erected in honour of Vesta, there were many magnificent examples in antiquity, and one in particular which attracts more than usual notice, from its elegant construction and perfect preservation, is this day to be seen at Rome, in the beautiful round church of Saint Stephen, upon the banks of the Tiber, which is generally supposed by antiquaries to be the old temple of Vesta, asserted to have been situated in this quarter of the city. This temple was built by Numa; and Plutarch, in his account of it, in a very particular manner corroborates all that I have just observed. His words are; "Numa built a temple of an orbicular form for the preservation of the sacred fire; intending, by the fashion of

the edifice, to shadow out, not so much the earth, or Vesta, considered in that character, as the WHOLE UNIVERSE; in the centre of which the Pythagoreans placed FIRE, which they called VESTA and UNITY."*

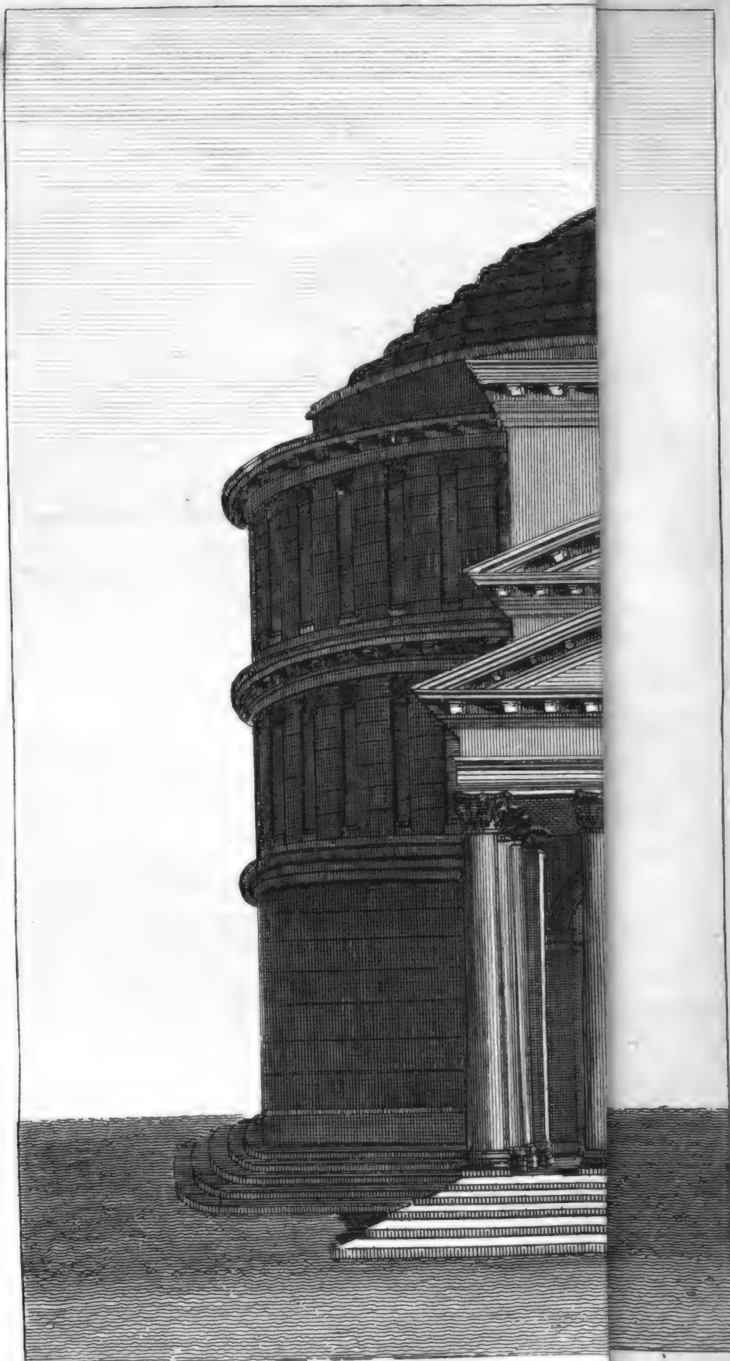
Upon this account it was that the ancients so frequently represented the world by the apt symbol of an egg: and the reader will find that idea most remarkably exemplified and illustrated in the temple of the serpent CNUPHIS, which the reader has already been informed, was an *oval building*, resembling, in form, many of the Indian temples, and to which, in our progress up the Nile, we shall presently arrive.

In the course of this extensive review of the origin and progress of Architecture in Asia, I have observed that convenience first, and superstition afterwards, gave the earliest edifices of the world a pyramidal form. Of these, the pyramids of Egypt, and the pyramidal temples of India have been referred to as striking and memorable proofs. A more extensive acquaintance with physics, added to the speculations of astronomy, was the occasion of their afterwards assuming the quadrangular shape, allusive to the four cardinal points and the four elements of nature. It only remained for the piety of

* Plutarch de Iside et Osiride, p. 67.

theologians and the fancy of philosophers to unite in the invention of a form of building like that recently described, and upon such a comprehensive scale as might seem to render it an epitome of the universe itself, in which all the phenomena of nature should be exhibited at one glance to the astonished spectator: and all the deities adored in that universe, superior or subordinate, receive at once his profound adoration. Among supernal temples, it was to be exactly similar to what the cave of Mithra, in the Median mountains was among subterraneous shrines. That cave, Porphyry acquainted us, resembled the world fabricated by Mithra; a cave, in the lofty roof of which the signs of the Zodiac were sculptured in golden characters; while through its spacious dome, represented by orbs of different metals, symbolical of their power and influences, the SUN and PLANETS performed their ceaseless and undeviating revolutions. From an extensive and accurate examination of the systems of Asiatic theology, descending down through various ages and by various channels to the ancient people of Italy, I think I may safely venture to assert that the grand PANTHEON, or ROTUNDO, of Rome, was a temple of this distinguished kind, and I proceed to prove the assertion, by the strong internal





To the **PYRAMIDAL**, *and* **QUADRANGULAR** *blest in antiquity was the* **PANTHEON** *of Rome, of which the immen... of* **HEAVEN**.

T. Prattent sc.

evidence which that fabric exhibits, that it was neither more nor less than a stupendous Mithratic temple.

> Mark! how the dread Pantheon stands
> Amidst the domes of meaner hands!
> Amidst the toys of idle state,
> How simply, how severely great!

This vast edifice, this most august, most venerable, and most perfect, relic of antiquity remaining in the world, according to the more common opinion among antiquaries, was built by Agrippa, son-in-law of Augustus, in his third consulate, about twenty-five years before Christ. However, Dion Cassius informs us that Agrippa only repaired the building, and adorned and strengthened it with that admirable portico, which, indeed, is scarcely less an object of wonder than the fabric itself, consisting of sixteen pillars of Oriental granite of prodigious magnitude, yet each composed of only a single stone. These pillars are of the Corinthian order, and are ranged in two rows of eight columns each. one in the front, and the other rising to a great height behind them. The conjecture founded on the assertion of Dion Cassius, that the date of its fabrication was considerably more ancient than the æra of Agrippa's con-

sulship, is by far the most probable of the two, since it carries us back still nearer to the æra in which the mysteries of Mithra were first imported into Rome by those of her conquering sons, who first carried the Roman arms into Asia. I conceive, therefore, the Pantheon to be a temple erected to Apollo, that is, the Mithra of the Romans, to whom I before observed an altar was erected in the Capitol, thus inscribed; *Deo Soli invicto, Mithræ;* to Mithra, the Sun, the unconquered God. Dedicated to the solar deity, and symbolical of the world, vivified by his ray, the Pantheon, like all other temples, was built circular; the body of that immense rotundo representing the earth, and the convex dome the expanded canopy of heaven. Pliny, indeed, speaking of this boast of ancient, and ornament of modern, Rome, expressly affirms this circumstance concerning its spacious dome; quod forma ejus convexa fastigiatam CŒLI SIMILITUDINEM ostenderet. To admit the FOUNTAIN OF LIGHT, to whose honour it was erected, in the centre of its vaulted cupola, a cavity, twenty-nine feet in diameter, was pierced, by which, alone, the whole edifice was illuminated; and, when the sun was exalted to its highest southern meridian, those beams descended into the body of it

in a copious and dazzling flood of glory. The portal is placed full north, according to the regulations that prevailed in the ancient Mithratic caverns; but such a portal, the most stupendous of those temples never enjoyed; for, its dimensions are forty feet in height and twenty-five in breadth. Through this door the admiring populace entered, and beheld, exactly opposite to it, that is, *in the south*, a colossal image of Apollo himself, (the symbol of the meridian sun,) and, on either side of him, recesses for the six great tutelary gods, that is, the planets, known by the respective symbols that adorned their images; the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Between each of these grand recesses, intended for the planetary gods, and likewise over those recesses, were small sacella, that is, shrines, or tabernacles, twenty-four in number, in which were placed the images of those twenty-four stars, which the ancients, as we shall see hereafter in my investigation of the Persian triad of Deity and the mediatorial character of Mithra, considered in the capacity of Mediators, counsellors, and judges, in all terrestrial concerns; twelve of which they assigned to the living, and twelve to the dead. Such is the account of this stupendous fabric as given by the classics; from which I have

been led to conclude that it was a solar temple, erected when that worship was more general in Italy, however afterwards altered, adorned, and re-dedicated, by the magnificent Agrippa, whose name is sculptured in large characters in the front of his own majestic portico. For the sake of those of my readers who may have less easy access to the engraved monuments of antiquity, I have had the finest print of it extant copied into this volume, and the first view of it will, I am convinced, go far to impress upon their minds the truth of my observations. The whole external part of the dome of this building was covered with plates of gilt brass, which were carried away by the Emperor Constantine the Third. It was adorned also with great beams of brass, which Pope Urban the Eighth had taken down and melted, to form the canopy of wreathed columns of that metal over the high altar in St. Peter's church, and the vast pieces of artillery in the castle of St. Angelo. At present it is used as a Christian church, and, as it was consecrated to all the pagan gods, so now it is sacred to all the saints in the Roman calender, saints full as numerous as those gods, and doubtless adored with equal fervour.

The inside of that dome, beautifully partitioned out in quadratures, was overlaid with

plates of silver finely wrought, of which it has long since been deprived by the avarice of the successive plunderers of that celebrated city, once the mistress of the world. A gentleman of great knowledge in antiquities, who has lately arrived from examining, on the spot, this immense structure, acquaints me that, of the sixteen lofty pillars, of which originally the portico consisted, only thirteen at present remain; that the edifice itself, which was anciently *ascended* by seven steps that ranged quite round the whole pile, is now, from the surface of the ground having been elevated, *descended* into by twelve steps; and that, from this particular circumstance, as well as from its originally being formed without windows, and its receiving light only at the opening of the roof, it, at this moment, exhibits the exact representation of a vast round cavern, filling the mind of the astonished beholder with mingled impressions of holy awe and gloomy apprehension.

This specimen of building, therefore, is exactly in the style of the HYPÆTHRON of the ancients; and derived its origin from the pyræia, or fire-temples, of Persia, the dome of which Zoroaster covered over to prevent the sacred fire from being extinguished. Of this ornamental improvement, the ancient Persian pyratheion,

engraved in my former volume, is an instance directly in point; and I am firmly of opinion that the very same superstition gave its orbicular form to the buildings of those nations, which in after ages, either by conquest or commerce, had connections with Persia. Nearly all the Indian temples, whether fabricated in the form of a cross, as that of Mathura and Benares, or in any other fashion, except that of the pyramid, have high domes in the centre, and, if not externally terminating in a dome, the adytum, or sanctuary, fails not to have its roof thus formed. I do not, however, insist, that the Indians took this model from the Persians, since we have seen, that in their own most ancient and majestic cavern-pagoda of Salsette, over the stupendous altar, where the sacred fire was for ever cherished, twenty-seven feet in height and twenty in diameter, there expands a noble CONCAVE DOME, of proportionate dimensions; and it is more than probable, that the exploring eye of Zoroaster, in his visit to India, had searched out and examined this wonderful excavation, as well as that of Elephanta adjoining. If, however, the Indians, whose laws, sanctioned by tremendous threatenings, prohibit, and whose pride has ever disdained, the borrowing from other nations their sacred rites and civil customs,

or imitating their prevailing manners, have not condescended to copy the Persians, there is one mighty nation, whose august temples are spread over half the continent of Asia, that undoubtedly has, in the fabrication of those temples, imitated the Zoroastrian model of building. It must be evident to the Oriental scholar that I allude to the Arabians, who, in the seventh century, under the Caliph Omar, or rather Valid, his general, poured their victorious legions into Persia; and, by the subjugation and death of KHOSRO YEZDEGIRD, the last monarch of the Sassanian dynasty,* became sovereigns of that vast empire. Even at this day, Sir John Chardin informs us, not only the temples, but "the private houses of Persia, are always vaulted, and that, from long use, they are unable to build them otherwise. There is, he adds, no country in the world where they make domes both so high and so stately. Their skill in

* See Al Makin's Historia Saracenica, p. 22, edit. quarto. Ludg. Bat. 1625. The above is the edition of this celebrated Arabian historian, published by Erpenius, which will be constantly referred to hereafter, and forms one grand source of the future history. The reader will observe, that Khosro was an ancient imperial title, assumed by the Persian Shahs, resembling that of Ptolemy in Egypt, and Cæsar in Rome. The true Oriental name of the great CYRUS of our classics is CAI KHOSRU.

erecting them is evident from this circumstance, that they use no scaffolds to make the arches and domes of smaller proportion, as they do in Europe."*

On this subject of the arch and the dome immemorially existing in the architecture of India, I must once more, for a short interval, direct the eye of the reader to Egypt, for the purpose of noticing a very curious fact. I have before observed that the sublime conceptions of Deity, entertained by the old Egyptians, and the superstitious belief that, while the body could be preserved entire, the soul continued hovering around its ancient comrade, united to give the stamp of such stupendous grandeur to the shrines of Deity, and, to their monumental edifices, the air, and almost the means of eternal durability. Nothing so perishable as wood or mortar, from all appearance, was ever used in the construction of those immense fabrics. Astonishing blocks of marble or granite, elevated to the loftiest heights, and at the remotest distances from the original quarry, compose the massy walls and cover the ponderous roofs. Where towering magnificence and indestructible solidity were the principal aim, the rules of very exact proportion, the charms of impressive ele-

* Chardin's Travels, vol. ii. p. 279.

gance, could not well be expected; and perhaps the Egyptians have been too severely stigmatized, by Goguet and others, for not possessing excellencies of which the national prejudices and their accustomed style of building forbade the full display. Though this argument may be urged as an apology for the defect of symmetry, too visible in their buildings, yet no arguments can explain away the very singular phænomenon, which the writer last mentioned has pointed out and demonstrated, that a nation perpetually engaged in architectural efforts of the most various and elaborate kinds, should be totally ignorant of the method of turning an arch or forming the majestic dome. "We find not the least indication of an arch," says that writer, "in all the remains of their ancient buildings. We do not even find that they knew the art of cutting archwise the blocks of stone which form the heads of their doors. They are all uniformly terminated by a lintel absolutely strait and even. It is the same thing with their roofs, which are uniformly flat."* In proof of this assertion the president has engraved, in his learned production, the superb temples of Cnuphis and Dendera as well as the various portals and columns of Thebes, in which

* See Goguet's Origin of Laws, vol. iii. p. 74.

it must be owned that nothing can have a more contemptible appearance than the narrow, contracted, flat, and low, entrances into buildings at once so lofty and superb. It is very remarkable that the same disgusting species of flat roof and portal offends the eye at the pagoda of Elephanta, which circumstance, I am of opinion, must be admitted as a proof of its superior antiquity to that of Salsette, which internally is arched and has a fine dome; as the latter circumstance, I presume, may of the prior proficiency of the Indians in the arts of sculpture to the Egyptians, who, we have seen, knew not how in those ancient periods to give their buildings the graceful bend of the arch.

It was from that ancient nation of fire-worshippers that this hitherto barbarous race of marauders learned to build those stately mosques whose beautiful domes, rising amidst the embowering verdure of lofty palms, give to the Asiatic cities so magnificent an appearance. Hence the gilded cupolas that glitter at Constantinople, the massy rotundos that ornament Damascus and Cairo, and that noble sepulchral pile of the Mohammedan usurper Shire Shah at Sasseram, in Bahar, of which the admired pencil of Mr. Hodges, to whom Europe is indebted for a prospect of so many of the ancient

buildings of India, has presented the public with the bold elevation.

The OVAL building, which represents the world in the form of an egg, is of a still more ancient date, even that of the oldest cavern-worship, where the stupendous excavation was made to assume that form; and two remarkable instances of that kind of edifice strike the Oriental eye in the ruins of the temple of the serpent Cnuphis, in the Thebais, and in the immense, but irregular OVAL of Jaggernaut, in Orissa. This latter temple Mr. Hamilton, in a former page, has described as exhibiting the appearance of an immense butt, set on one end, and as illumined by a hundred lamps, kept continually burning, than which nothing can convey a more correct or impressive idea of a lighted cavern. Indeed, I may with propriety remark, that as Jaggernaut signifies *Lord of the creation*, it was perfectly consonant to Eastern mythology, that he should be worshipped in a temple, by the very form of which the universe which he created was so aptly symbolized.

To hasten towards the conclusion of this Disquisition, if we finally turn our eye to the species of architecture which we denominate GOTHIC, whether we consider that more ancient kind of Gothic edifice which was introduced

into Europe after the subversion of the power of Rome in the fifth century, an architecture distinguished, like that of the Egyptians, by massy though rude magnificence, both in the proportions of the building itself, and in the style of its unweildy columns, or whether we advert to that less cumbrous and more ornamented Gothic structure, introduced about the tenth century, and called ARABESC and SARACENICAL, from the general survey of either, however, different in the minutiæ of decoration, there will result very evident proof, that the most ancient *sylvan* method of erecting temples was by no means forgotten, but rather that it was only more correctly copied. Of the former kind few instances, in this country, now remain; of the latter, many very perfect and beautiful specimens, as Westiminster-abbey, and the cathedrals of Litchfield and Salisbury. Upon entering either of those vast edifices, and viewing the vista of columns ranging through it, all terminating in regular arches above, who is there but must immediately be struck with their resemblance to a long and regular avenue of trees, whose branches intermixing with each other over head, form a lofty embowering arch of natutal verdure? The Gothic arches indeed are not circular, like those of the East; for they

universally terminate in a point, formed by the intersection of two segments of a circle; but in some strictures of Warburton upon this subject, the reason for their adopting that mode of finishing them is judiciously explained; for, after observing that "this northern people (the direct descendants of the old Scythians) having been accustomed, during the gloom of Paganism, to worship the deity in groves, when their new religion required covered edifices, they ingeniously projected to make them resemble groves as nearly as the distance of architecture would permit;"—this great genius proceeds to observe, in regard to the form of the Gothic arches, "could those arches be otherwise than pointed, when the workmen were to imitate that curve, which branches of two opposite trees make by their insertion with one another? Or could the columns be otherwise than split into distinct shafts, when they were to represent the stems of a clump of trees growing close together? On the same principles they formed the spreading ramification of the stone-work in the windows of the Gothic cathedral, and the stained glass in the interstices; the one to represent the branches, and the other the leaves, of an opening grove, while both together concurred to preserve that gloomy light which inspires religious reverence and dread."*

* See a note of Bishop Warburton upon Pope's Epistles.

Among the other distinguished features in the character of Gothic architecture, it falls more immediately within my province to notice once more those lofty spires and pinnacles, which, like the minarets of the Turkish mosques, so universally decorate them, and which I cannot but consider as relics of the ancient predominant solar superstition.

From the preceding strictures, it is evident how powerful an influence the philosophy and physical speculations of the ancients had upon their modes of constructing sacred buildings. This must be equally apparent to the reader into whatever country he darts his retrospective glance; whether he surveys the pyramids of Deogur and Tanjore, or the more lofty and spacious ones of Egypt; whether he ranges among the dark verandas of Elephanta, whose winding aisles, clustering columns, and secluded chapels, bring to his memory the mysterious rites of initiation, or wanders by moon-light through the umbrageous recesses of holy groves devoted to the same gloomy superstition; whether the arched vaults of Salsette resound with hymns to Surya, or the praises of Mithra, entering the vernal signs, shake the splendid Median cavern, where his sculptured image flamed aloft, and the orbs of heaven revolved in an artificial planisphere; whether the stu-

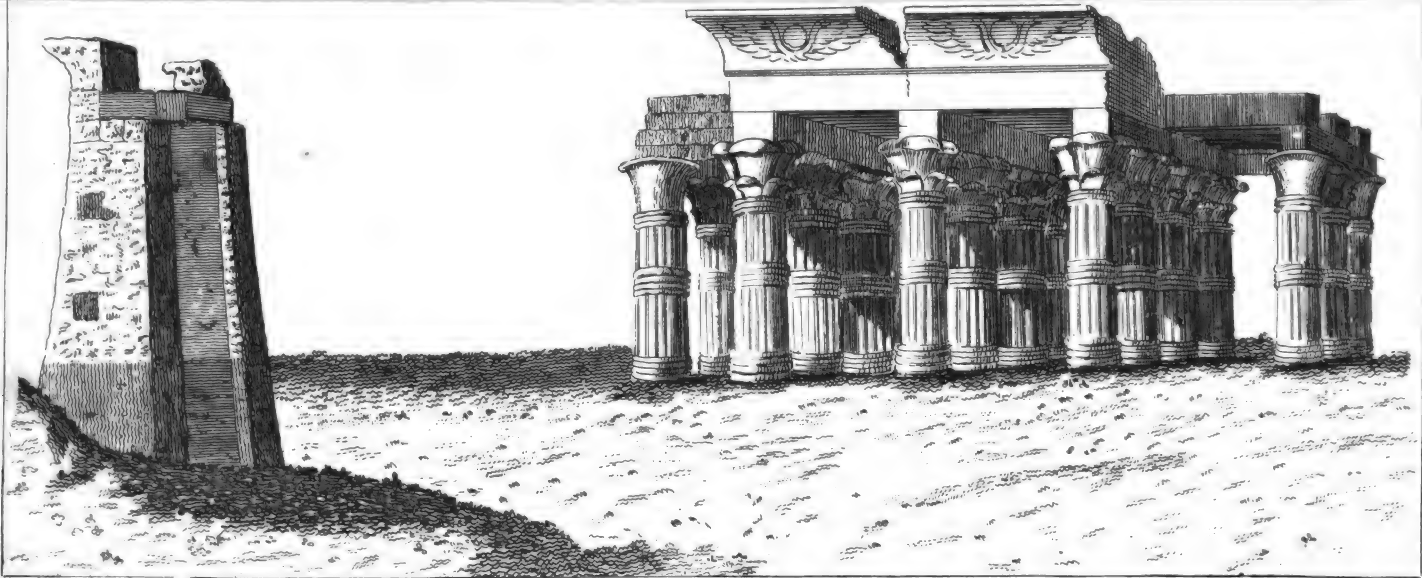
pendous oval of Jaggernaut attract his attention; the vast quadrangle of Seringham: the lofty diverging crosses of Benares and Mathura; the domes of the Zoroastrian fire-temples; or, finally, the grand Pantheon of Rome, the fabrication of astronomy and mythology combined: on every review, and from every region, accumulated proofs arise how much more extensively than is generally imagined the designs of the ancients in architecture were affected by their speculations in astronomy and their wild mythological reveries.

END OF THE DISSERTATION ON ORIENTAL ARCHITECTURE.

SECTION IV.

The Author returns to his Excursion up the Thebais, and the Examination of its architectural Remains.—The Pyramids of Sacarra, more in the Indian Style of Building than those of Geza.—Ruins of Medinet-Habu, the ancient Memnonium;—of Essnay, the old Latopolis;—of Komombu, the ancient Ombos;—of Assouan, the ancient Seyene, with its celebrated solstitial Well;—of the Temple of the Serpent Cnuphis, or Cneph, at Elephantina;—and of that of Isis at Phile;—with astronomical and mythological Observations upon the ancient mystic Rites celebrated in them, and a Comparison of them with those anciently performed in the sacred Caverns of India.

I RE-COMMENCE my observations on the buildings that border on the Nile by lamenting that the pyramids of Sacarra were not earlier noticed by me. There are three that principally attract attention, and two of them are of a



The beautiful ruins of KOMOMBU *in Upper Egypt; the stones that form the roof are of an enormous magnitude and the columns which support that roof exceed 24 feet in circumference, and are clustered in imitation of the* TREES *which constituted the ancient* GROVE TEMPLES



form widely different from those of Geza. The first is built in four regular stories, growing less in proportion as they rise higher; and, as the whole is cased, according to Pococke, with hewn stone,* its original covering, and yet is formed with steps for ascending the summit, the same argument, though that argument is by no means proved, will not hold against its being used as an observatory, as has been applied to the greatest pyramid of Geza, viz. that it was once cased over with a smooth sheet of polished marble, which rendered such ascent to its apex scarcely possible. The second, it is very remarkable, is formed precisely after the fashion of the ancient Deogur pyramid, engraved by Mr. Hodges's obliging permission, in this work, of which, the reader may observe, that the body bulges out towards the centre. The third of these pyramids resembles those of Geza, and is of a magnitude not inferior. The second pyramid here described Mr. Norden notices as far the most ancient in appearance of any of the great pyramids of Egypt, and he declares he should without hesitation pronounce it to be so.† This is a circumstance highly deserving the consideration of both the Egyptian and Indian

* Pococke, vol. i. p. 50.

† Norden's Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. ii. p. 14.

antiquary. A comparison of the Deogur pyramid with those of Sacarra, engraved in Norden's 61st plate, (for that in Pococke is less accurate,) will convince the reader of the exact uniformity, above asserted to exist, in the style of the architecture of these two most ancient nations.

The most important ruin in the neighbourhood of Thebes is Medinet-Habu, which Pococke considers as the remains of the old Memnonium; but our Egyptian travellers describe that temple as only a vast mass of mouldering vestibules, columns, and colossal statues, extending over near half a league of ground, all entirely subverted, except one most magnificent portal, engraved in Norden's 99th plate, which the Arabs have made the gate of their city, a portal which indeed is truly stupendous, and demonstrates what the structure, when complete, must anciently have been. The next majestic and more perfect edifice is the superb temple of Essnay, the old Latopolis, of which the reader is here presented with a correct engraving from the last-mentioned writer; and the following account of it is principally taken from his own description. The temple of Essnay is an oblong square, and is enclosed on three sides with walls of great thick-

ness. The front is open, and presents to view six large fluted columns, having capitals decorated with palm leaves. Eighteen other columns, equally large and beautiful, ranging in regular order behind those in front, support a roof composed of immense slabs of sculptured marble. A channelled border runs all round the top of the edifice; the whole structure is in the highest state of preservation, and is covered, both on the inside and outside, with innumerable hieroglyphics, that seem to be of the most ancient kind. M. Savary, in 1779, visited this august temple, and found it full of the accumulated dung and filth of the cattle which the Arabs fodder in it; for, those barbarians, he adds, do not blush to make cow-stalls of the finest monuments of ancient Egypt.*

On the same plate I have caused to be engraved the ruins of KOMOMBU, the ancient OMBOS. Half buried behind a mountain of sand on one hand, says Mr. Norden, and obscured by many miserable cottages on the other; yet all this does not prevent the curious traveller from being able to contemplate with wonder and delight these beautiful ruins. The building rests upon twenty-three columns, well wrought and adorned with hieroglyphics. The

* Letters on Egypt, vol. ii. p. 67.

stones that serve to cover the top are of a prodigious size; and we clearly perceive that the architrave, which at present is split in two, anciently consisted of a single stone. The columns have more than twenty-four feet in circumference, and are greater than those of Medinet-Habu.* It is to be lamented, he adds, that this edifice cannot subsist long, since two sides of it alone are discernible, and that barely; the upper part is covered with earth; and the columns, as well as the building, are three parts under-ground.—Dr. Pococke, on this ruin, observes, that the capitals of the columns are in the best Egyptian taste, adorned with leaves; and there seemed to him to have been anciently before the temple such a grand gate as that before described at Thebes, of which he is of opinion the detached building on the South-West (likewise engraved on the plate here presented to the reader) formed a part.

After all that has been observed, relative to the high proficiency in astronomy of the Egyptians and other Oriental nations, it would be exceedingly improper to pass by SYENE, the present Assouan, situated, says Pococke, exactly under the tropic of Cancer; and the celebrated

* Norden's Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. ii. p. 95.

SOLSTITIAL WELL of its ancient observatory, the ruins of which are described, and a plan of them given, in that writer.* The observatory is an ancient edifice with apertures at the top, to let in the solar light, and windows fronting the East. The well beneath, for astronomical observations, Strabo informs us, was sunk to mark precisely the period of the summer solstice, on that day, when the stile of the sun-dial, at noon, casts no shadow; on that day, when the beam of the vertical sun, darting directly to the bottom of the well, the entire image of its orb was reflected from the illumined surface of the transparent water.†

We now approach the famous cataracts of the Nile, and consequently the end of our speculative excursion upon this mighty river. The temples of Elephantina and of Philaë alone remain to be noticed; and objects, the proper investigation of which would require a volume, must be discussed in a few pages.—Elephantina is an island of no great extent, situated near the Western shore of the Nile: it is celebrated in classical history for the venerated shrine of the serpent Cnuphis, or Cneph, which it contained; and, for its Nilometer, a vast stone

* See Pococke's Egypt, vol. i. p. 117, and plate 48.
† Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 817.

tube, by which the degrees of the increase of the waters of the Nile were measured, and thence proclaimed throughout Egypt. The temple of Cnuphis is a most superb but ruined edifice, the top of which, according to Norden, as well as one of its sides, is now covered with drifted earth and sand. A vast wall seems formerly to have secluded from human view a temple devoted to the profoundest mysteries of the ancient religion of Egypt; for, Pococke describes that wall as built at a very small distance from the body of the temple, and thus constructed, he remarks, (a remark frequently occurring in the course of his work in consequence of his having observed similar gloomy partitions and winding avenues adjoining to or surrounding almost all the temples of Egypt,) "to carry on some arts to deceive the people."* Undoubtedly rites similar to those before described to have been celebrated in the gloomy aisles and ranging recesses of the sacred Indian caverns, and in succeeding ages, at Eleusis, were there performed; the rites of *initiation*, the mysteries of serpent-worship, the emblem of regeneration and of eternity. And here we cannot refrain from again remarking how extensively that expressive symbol was adopted over all the ancient

* Pococke, vol. i. p. 118.

world. It for ever occurs, in a thousand modifications of its sinuous body on nearly all the statues of those caverns, and is a favourite emblem in all the religious festivals of India. In the awful and tremendous rites of Mithra, which will hereafter be at large unfolded in the chapter of Hindoo penances and purifications, a serpent was thrown into the bosom of the candidate, in token of his having cast off the vestments of earthly impurity, in the same manner as that reptile annually changes its skin and renews its vigour. The Phœnicians adorned the lofty temples of Tyre with this emblem, which was there seen suspended on high, and encircling in its genial folds the mundane egg, or symbol of the universe. The great Chinese dragon, distinct with yellow scales, is the same identical mundane serpent. The Egyptians, we see, exalted the serpent to the rank of Deity itself. The Northern astronomers of Asia fixed the vast form of the Lucidus Anguis on the sphere of the heavens; and the Indo-Scythian Druids, their descendants, stamped it on the terrestrial sphere, by portraying its waving folds on twenty-four acres of the wide champaign of Abury. What is not the least remarkable circumstance, in regard to this wonderful animal, is, that it makes a conspicuous figure among

the few symbolical references allowed of in the nobler system of our own theology; for, the serpent is at once the emblem of the malignant *destroyer* and the beneficent HEALER of the human race.

The serpent Cneph, the more immediate object of our present disquisition, was, in fact, the AGATHODAIMON of the Egyptians; the word signifies WINGED. The true Oriental primitive, Bishop Cumberland has enabled me to give in another part of these volumes; and thence a wonderful and decided proof will arise, not only of my assertion in a former page,* that the Cneph of Egypt and the Narayen of India, both described, in their respective mythologic systems, as blue ætherial beings with wings, hovering over primordial waters, are the same; but by it the FINAL, THE GRAND, OBJECT (not perhaps visible to every reader) of this Disquisition will be demonstrated, viz. the evident relation which they both bear to the true theology, and to that purer, that eternal, SPIRIT, which, at the beginning of time, floated upon the Chaos and made it prolific. Those who choose to cavil, and call these lucubrations desultory and tending to no

* See vol. ii. p. 364, and the subsequent pages, in which that parallel between Cneph and Narayen first takes place, which is here continued, and will be concluded hereafter.

useful purpose, because *they* may not comprehend the scope of my argument and the extensive plan formed in my own mind for the unravelling of certain grand and stupendous truths, darkened by Asiatic mythology, and dormant amidst the rubbish of pagan history, may perhaps finally be convinced of the injustice of suspicions so rashly formed and censures so inconsiderately bestowed.

The term Cneph, according to a different writer,* means the *greatest good*, which is the true character of the Agathodaimon, the good spirit by which the world is cherished and invigorated. They made the serpent his symbol; and, in time, adored the symbol instead of the object symbolized. The temple of Cneph, therefore, the supreme spirit, became in time the temple of the serpent Cnuphis, a word which appears to be only a corruption of the former; or, if the reader should reject that idea, he may find its origin in the Arabic word Canupha, which Golius interprets *covered, protected*, whence our English word *canopy*. This must suffice for the present, in relation to that Cneph, concerning whom so much hereafter will occur. Eusebius, however, acquaints us, that at Elephantina they adored another deity in the figure

* Jablonski in Panth. Ægypt, tom. 1. in voce Cneph.

of a man, in a sitting posture, painted blue, having the head of a ram, with the horns of a goat encircling a disk. The deity thus described is plainly of astronomical origin, denoting the power of the sun in Aries. It is, however, exceedingly remarkable that Pococke actually found, and on his 48th plate has engraved, an antique colossal statue of a man, sitting in the the very front of this temple, with his arms folded before him, and bearing in each hand a very singular kind of *lituus*, or crozier. The head of this figure, like its body, is human: its high cap represents a cone, the ancient emblem of the sun; and formerly, perhaps, the statue might have been painted blue, and decorated with emblems similar to those described by Eusebius.*

The mysterious gloom, apparent about this temple, led Norden to think it sepulchral, and hence he mistakes a large square table, "quite plain and without any inscription, standing in the centre," which was doubtless the altar on which the deity adored, or his statue, stood, for a tomb-stone that covered some urn or mummy deposited below.† A cloister, he informs us, runs all round the inside of the building, and it

* See Eusebii Præp. Evang. p. 116.
† See Norden, vol. ii. p. 101.

is supported through its whole length by columns. It is entered through two grand gates, the one to the *South*, the other to the *North*; another proof of uniformity in the ideas of those who formed the ancient caverns, to which Porphyry, cited before, alludes, and those who built the Egyptian temples. He adds, that the walls are covered with hieroglyphics of the most ancient kind, are bedawbed with dirt, and blackened with the smoke of fires, which the shepherds have kindled there. As it cannot, however, be supposed, that immediately under the tropic of Cancer, many fires were ever necessary to warm the shivering shepherd, it is more reasonable to conclude, that those walls were blackened with the smoke of former sacrifices and the incense that was kept contiually burning. It is probable that this temple had other magnificent colonnades and portals, and that we see but its majestic fragments; for, Pococke describes, about the middle of the island, the remains of a stately gate of red granite, finely adorned with hieroglyphics, which he supposes to have been one of the grand entrances of the serpent's temple.*

We arrive, at length, at El Heiff, the ancient Phile, the boundary of our voyage; and the

* Pococke, vol. i. p. 118.

very name offers no inconsiderable matter of reflection. From its ancient appellation, its modern Arabic name, in fact, does not vary; except in the mode of writing it; for El Heiff, read in the European manner, as the latter Greeks read, from left to right, will turn out to be no other than Phile. I say the latter Greeks, because the ancient method of writing, even in Greece, was not always from left to right; since there are many ancient Greek coins and monuments, which evince, that, like the Arabians themselves, they at first followed the style of writing in use among the Egyptians and Phœnicians, from whom, by means of Cadmus, they obtained them. Afterwards, indeed, they adopted that curious method of writing alternately from the right hand to the left, and from the left to right, called Βυστροφηδον, or after the manner in which furrows are ploughed by oxen; of which method also there are monumental inscriptions yet remaining.* An ancient writer asserts, that from this way of writing the Latin word *versus* was derived; *versus* vulgo vocati, quia sic scribebant antiqui, sicut aratur terra, quos et hodie rustici versus vocant.† It is not

* Consult the Sigæan and other inscriptions in Mr. Chishull's Antiquitates Asiaticæ, p. 126.

† Isidor. Orig. lib. vi. cap. 14.

impossible, however, that this mode of writing might be derived from the *strophe* and *anti-strophe* of the ancient poets, when they sang the praises of Apollo, whose priests were accustomed to dance round his altars, first from the right hand, and then back again from the left, in imitation of his own supposed motion in the heavens. We have in this instance fresh evidence how much, in all sacred concerns, their conduct was influenced by their astronomical speculations.

Phile is a small island, scarcely half a league in circumference, immediately bordering on Ethiopia and the cataracts. It is represented as exceedingly high land, rugged and broken, but abounding " with superb antiquities."* Its whole rocky coast is cut out in the form of a wall, lofty, and of vast thickness, with what appeared to our travellers to be bastions and fortifications.† It enclosed the most sacred, as the Egyptians thought, of all deposits, the relics of Osiris, and the whole island was esteemed to be consecrated ground. In the Thebais, there could not be a more solemn oath taken than that by the remains of Osiris, inhumed in the hallowed island of Phile.‡ The travellers, so

* Norden, vol. ii. p. 122. † Pococke, vol. i. p. 120.
‡ Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 19.

often cited above, describe the ruins of what they denominate two temples; but as, according to Pococke, the island itself does not exceed a quarter of a mile in length, or half a quarter of a mile in breadth, we may reasonably conclude that the two structures described are only the more prominent sections of one vast edifice, of which the smaller portions and the connecting lines are lost amidst the inroads of oblivious time, and the rubbish accumulated by the subversion of such mighty ruins. The principal entrance into this temple was on the north side, and it was under a grand pyramidal gate, with a lofty obelisk of red granite on each side within; the symbols of Osiris, whose relics were preserved there. This noble gate, and all the walls of the temple, are richly covered with hieroglyphics in the best style, among which is more particularly and frequently discernible the figure of the sacred HAWK, another symbol of the beneficent Osiris; and the occasion of its being so will presently be explained, as well as the mythologic history, to which nearly all the sacred animals and plants of Egypt, engraved or painted in their temples, have reference. On the plates of Norden, beyond the grand entrance, may be distinctly traced interior courts, and long colonnades of pillars, beautifully

wrought, with varied capitals, of which specimens are exhibited in a separate engraving; capitals, which, though fabricated long before the Grecian orders were invented, this author asserts, and the designs demonstrate, in contradiction to all that has been advanced concerning the total want of taste and genius in the Egyptian architecture, "to be of the utmost delicacy.*".

Throughout the whole of this famous island, where anciently the solemn and mysterious rites of Isis were celebrated with such distinguished pomp and splendour, there appeared to Mr. Norden to run subterraneous passages. He attempted to descend several of the steps that led down into them, but was prevented by the filth and rubbish with which they were filled, from penetrating to any depth. It was probably in those gloomy avenues, so similar to the cavern-excavations of India, that the grand and mystic arcana of this goddess were unfolded to the adoring aspirant; while the solemn hymns of initiation resounded through the long extent of those stony recesses. It was there that superstition at midnight waved high her flaming torch before the image of Isis, borne in procession;

* See Norden, vol. ii. p. 127, and Pococke, vol. i. p. 121.

and there that her chosen priests, in holy ecstasy, chanted their sweetest symphonies.

This description of the proudest temple, and this allusion to the secret rites of Isis, will naturally induce the reader to turn his eye to the page of Apuleius, who was initiated into them, and whose relation will serve as introductory to that ample inquiry into the physical theology and animal worship of Egypt, with which it is my intention to conclude this chapter. The whole institution, though not without a deep moral and theological meaning, independent of the physical allegory, bore immediate allusion to the progressive stages of agriculture, and the passage of the Sun, or Osiris, from one tropic to the other. The secret process by which prolific nature, or Isis, matures the embryo seed, committed to its bosom, was in those rites mysteriously, but expressively, symbolized by grains of wheat or barley, deposited in covered baskets, and consecrated vases, borne about by the priests, into which no curious eye was permitted to penetrate. The departure of the sun for the cold Northern signs was announced by bitter wailings and lamentations of the priest, who bemoaned Osiris as if deceased, and Isis, for a time deserted by her lord. Darkness,

therefore, the deep incumbent darkness that wraps the wintry horizon, (for it was at the WINTER-SOLSTICE that these celebrations were invariably performed,) was made to involve the subterraneous vault, and the stings of famine goaded the aspirant, fainting with the long abstinence, enjoined previously to initiation. During all this melancholy process, according to Plutarch, a gilded Apis, or sacred bull, the symbol of Osiris, was exposed to the view of the people, covered with black lawn, in token of the imagined decease of the god of Egypt.* All of a sudden the surrounding darkness was dissipated by the glare of torches, borne aloft by priests, who were arrayed in white linen vestments, which reached down to their feet, and who preceded the disconsolate Isis, anxiously exploring her lost husband. Other priests, arrayed in similar stoles of virgin white, followed after. The first priest carried a lamp, burning with uncommon splendour, and fixed in a boat of gold; the emblem of Osiris sailing round the world in the sacred scyphus. The second priest bore two golden altars, flaming to his honour and that of his queen. The third priest in one hand carried a palm *branch*, curiously wrought in foliated gold; in the other,

* Plutarch de Iside et Osiride, p. 366.

the magic wand, or caduceus, of Hermes. The fourth priest carried a small palm-*tree*, the branch matured to its perfect growth. This plant, budding every month, I have before observed, was an emblem of the moon: the branch, I conceive, symbolized that orb in its increase; the tree, the *full-orbed moon*. The same priest carried also a golden vase in the form of a pap, which contained, says Apuleius, the sacred milk, the milk, I apprehend, of the Dea Multimamma, the many-breasted mother, by which universal nature is nourished. The fifth priest carried the golden van, the mystica vannus Iacchi, by which the ripened corn was to be winnowed. And the sixth and last priest carried the sacred *amphora*, or vase with two handles, whence copious libations of generous wine, the gift of Osiris and Isis, or, in other words, of Bacchus and Ceres, were poured out in honour of the celestial donors.* This solemn festival continued during four complete days, by which were shadowed out the four wintry months, *when Osiris was imagined to be found*, and his supposed return to the Southern signs, by which Isis, or nature, was rejoiced and vegetation invigorated, was hailed

* Apuleii Metamorph. vol. ii. lib. ii. p. 262. Edit. Bipont.

with bursts of joy and songs of triumph. The procession now emerged, like the rising beam of Osiris, from the darkness of the nether hemisphere, and the gloomy damps of subterraneous caverns were exchanged for the vivifying warmth of a vernal sun. All ranks and ages mingled in the festive dance; garlands of fresh flowers decorated every head, and mirth sate on every brow. Rich unguents and costly perfumes were dispersed in profusion around. Some waked the melodious pipe; others played on the golden and silver sistra; while others again, in transport, smote the Thebaic harp of wondrous structure and of magic potency.†

It is the opinion of M. Niebuhr, inserted in his chapter upon the ELEPHANTA cavern, that a full examination of the antiquity of caverns, their form and decorations, would not only throw great light upon the ancient history of India itself, but upon the history and theologic rites of other Asiatic nations of the ancients. An attention to their astronomical speculations can alone unfold to us the secret meaning of their rites and worship. With this key I have endeavoured, not wholly, I

* See engravings of two Thebaic harps in the first volume of Mr. Bruce's Travels.

trust without success, to unlock the portals of the sanctuaries in which their theological and philosophical mysteries were anciently celebrated in caverns and cavern-temples, and possibly I may have contributed somewhat towards removing the veil of obscurity, in which the history, the rites, and design, of the ancient superstitions have been so long involved. That certain mysterious rites *were* there celebrated has been proved, as far as analogy, in theological sentiments, and similarity, in the fabrication of the Indian caverns and cavern-temples, with those in the mountains of Persia and Upper Egypt, could tend to establish the proof. For, to what purpose was there the double entrance into them, by NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN GATES, according to the Homeric description of the Cave of the Nymphs, inserted in a former volume, of which, the North entrance was that through which the soul, in its journey of the Metempsychosis, passed to the lower spheres, while that to the South was sacred to celestials alone; and, finally, for what purpose were intended the winding avenues, the high altars, the tanks for ablution, and the gloomy interior recesses, but for the regular performance of similar ceremonies, and the arduous exercise of kindred virtues.

SECTION V.

The Whole of this Section is devoted to the more particular Consideration of that ancient Species of physical Superstition practised in the Temples of Egypt above-described; and, in the Course of it, the celebrated Treatise of Plutarch concerning Isis and Osiris is examined and explained.—Nearly all the hieroglyphic Animals and Plants honoured with Veneration in Egypt have Reference to the astronomical Speculations of the Priests of that Country; or are illustrative of the various Phænomena of Nature.—Osiris, why represented of a black *Colour, and sitting on the Lotos.—Why, among Animals, the Cat, the Dog, the Lion, the Sphynx, the Scarabæus, the Ibis, the Ichneumon, and Crocodile, considered as sacred.—Why, among Plants, the Nymphæa, the Onion, and others, regarded in the same Light.—The Arguments of the whole Inquiry summed up, and farther Proof*

adduced from the Result of the close Affinity of the ancient Religion and Customs of Egypt and India.

HAD the extensive history, to which these Dissertations are only introductory, allowed me sufficient leisure, I had formed the design of comparing throughout the famous treatise of Plutarch, on the superstitious worship anciently paid to Osiris and Isis, with the accounts of the Indian mythology and the theological rites, detailed to us in the page of M. Sonnerat and our more accurate countryman Sir W. Jones. That treatise contains a vast, but confused, mass of matter relative to the ancient theology of the Oriental world; on the whole highly instructive, but ill arranged and digested; and, as is sufficiently evident, scarcely understood by the author himself. The whole treatise is probably a mythological history of the earliest sovereigns and heroes of Egypt, under the fabulous characters of Osiris, Isis, Orus, and Typhon, represented by symbols emblematical of their respective powers, and the good or evil qualities possessed by them. Indeed Plutarch confirms this supposition, by expressly asserting, that the intention of the institution of the Egyptian rites

and mysteries was, " to preserve the memory of some valuable piece of history, or to represent to us some of the grand phænomena of nature."*

The precise period when the Egyptians began first to darken the page of genuine history, by blending with it the fables of mythology, was probably that moment of national infatuation when they began to deify deceased mortals; when they began to worship the host of heaven, and regard with veneration the elements of nature; for, in fact, their deities almost entirely consisted of canonized heroes, planets, stars, and elements, symbolically sculptured in their temples. At whatever period, however, the Egyptian hieroglyphics were first invented, their original meaning was scarcely known, even to the priests themselves, at the æra of the invasion of Cambyses: and, at the time when the Macedonian invader constructed Alexandria, probably out of the ruins of Memphis, the knowledge of them was wholly obliterated from their minds. The reader, who may not have perused Kircher and other antiquaries on the subject, will be able to form some idea of their general designation and intention from the following account given by Plutarch, concerning those on the

* Plutarch de Iside et Osiride, p. 20. edit. Squire.

portal of the temple of Minerva, at Sais. The first, in order, of the hieroglyphics engraven on that portal was AN INFANT; next to him was sculptured AN OLD MAN; next followed a HAWK; then A FISH; and lastly, A SEA-HORSE. The meaning of this hieroglyphic inscription he asserts, probably on the express authority of the priests of that temple, was as follows: "Oh! you, who are coming into the world, and you, who are going out of it, know that the Deity abhors immodesty." And he thus explains the symbols that designated the precept: by the infant were signified those who are coming into life, or the young; by the old man, those who are going out of it, or the aged; the hawk was their most common symbol of Osiris, or God; the fish was an animal which the Egyptians held in abhorrence, because it had relation to that sea, the cruel Typhon, which swallowed up their beloved Nile, for which reason also they thought every association with pilots induced pollution; while by the sea-horse was typified impudence, that creature being affirmed, by naturalists, first to slay his sire, and afterwards to violate his dam. Consonant to this mode of symbolizing ran the whole stream of the Egyptian theology; and, in exact unison with it, the universal tenor of Plutarch's philosophical

essay accords. Every thing is involved in the veil of allegory and physics. Thus Osiris, being the first great and good principle, and water, according to the doctrine both of Hermes and the Grecian Thales, the first principle of things, is represented of a *black* colour; because water is *black*, and gives a black tint to every thing with which it is mingled. Again, water, or the principle of abundant moisture in human bodies, causes generation, and therefore, in another respect, is a proper symbol of Osiris, the source of nutrition and fecundity. For instance, observes Plutarch, in young and vigorous persons, in whom moisture preponderates, the hair is black and bushy, while in wrinkled age, where moisture is deficient, the hair is thin and grey. Hence the Mnevis, or sacred ox of Heliopolis, the symbol of Osiris, was *black*; while the land of Egypt itself derived the name of Chemia (a term explained in the preceding chapter) from the blackness of its fat and humid soil. On this account, Osiris is sometimes delineated on coins and sculptures sitting on the leaf of the lotos, an aquatic plant; and, at other times, sailing with Isis in a boat round that world which subsists and is holden together by the pervading power of humidity.

In various preceding passages we have seen

how remarkably, in many points, the characters of Osiris and Seeva agree; and, if the characters of the Egyptian and Indian deities thus coincide, no less do many of the peculiar rites with which they were honoured.

Many of the circumstances more immediately parallel have been already noticed, and many additional will be pointed out hereafter. It may, with truth, be remarked, in regard to the mythology of these respective nations, that the general principles upon which it is founded are nearly the same; although the object, by which their conceptions are symbolized, occasionally vary. To present the reader with a remarkable instance of this in the case of Isis, in her lunar character, and Chandra, or the lunar orb, personified by the Hindoos. I have already observed, that, in Egypt, the symbol of the moon was a CAT; whereas the symbol of that satellite, in India, is a RABBIT. One reason, assigned by Plutarch for the former symbol, was the contraction and dilatation of the pupil of the eye of the former animal, which, he asserts, grows larger at the full of the moon, but decreases with her waning orb. There are, however, other reasons equally probable, and not less curious, mentioned by that author, and in the same page, for the adoption of the compa-

rison, which are the activity and vigilance of that animal during the season of the night, the variegated colours which its spotted skin discloses to the view, and its remarkable FECUNDITY. These latter peculiarities are equally exemplified in the RABBIT of the Indian CHANDRA, and shew a remarkable conformity of idea.

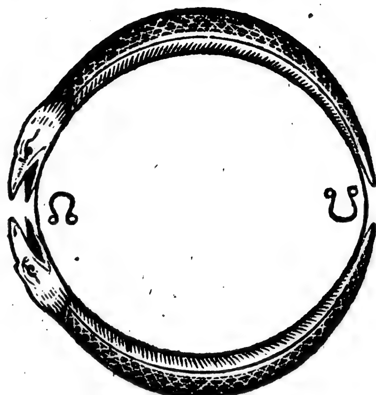
Nearly all the animals and plants of Egypt were made use of in illustration of their ever-varying and complicated mythology. While some were honoured as the representatives of benevolent, others were dreaded and abhorred as the symbols of malignant deities. By these deities were principally meant the orbs of heaven; and, by the benevolence and malignity alluded to, were intended the benign or noxious influences which they shed.

The DOG was at once an emblem of vigilance and fidelity, and a symbol of SIRIUS, the dog-star, that celestial BARKER, whose heliacal rising, we have seen, announced the commencement of the new year; and, for my own part, I am inclined to think that the bull, equally sacred to Osiris and Seeva, was, after all, principally symbolical of the BULL OF THE ZODIAC, or *sol in tauro*.

When the period of the inundation approached, the figure of Anubis, with *a dog's head* placed

on its shoulders, was exalted on high, as a signal for the retreat of the natives to their artificial terraces, elevated beyond the utmost height of the rising waters. This Anubis was the Mercury of the Egyptians, as is evident from the caduceus which he bears in his hand on most Egyptian sculptures; hence he was often called Ἑρμηνοῦβις, in other words, Mercury-Anubis. Plutarch, when explaining upon astronomical principles the mythology of Egypt, tells us, that, by Anubis, the Egyptians meant the HORIZONTAL CIRCLE, that separates the invisible part of the world, which they called NEPTHYS, from the visible, to which they gave the name of ISIS. If the reader should be inclined to credit this assertion of Plutarch, and, carrying on the astronomical allusion, should be anxious to know the real meaning of the caduceus, which he constantly bears, it falls to my province to unfold the real signification of that mistaken symbol, as it will hereafter largely to descant on the true history of this famous mythologic character, who I have observed is the god Bhood, of whom we read in the Indian history. The reader, who will take the trouble to turn to page 201 of the preceding volume of this work, will find all the mystery laid open in the figure of the celestial serpents, a symbol by

which, it is there observed, the ancients hieroglyphically designated the sun's path through the zodiac; and the circular curve described by the moon's orbit, to which the Oriental astronomers anciently gave the name of the dragon's head, belly, and tail.



Let him now take a pencil and draw the straight line of the equator through the centre of that circular figure, so as that one part shall pass through the opening, called the moon's *ascending node*, and the opposite one, called her *descending node*. He has only to suppose the bodies of those, or similar serpentine figures, lengthened and twisted round the line thus drawn, and he will have the true caduceus of Hermes; of that god, who, being nothing else, in reality, but the *horizontal circle personified*, equally touches upon the confines of light and darkness, and is, therefore, like the faithful dog,

his symbol on earth, equally vigilant by day and by night; of that god, who is the patron of thieves, whose depredations are made by night; of that god, who is the conductor of departed spirits to the region of Tartarus; that is, in spite of all the reveries of Gentile superstition, the inferior hemisphere, which is the only HELL of the Asiatic theologians.*

It is owing to this aspect of Hermes towards the two hemispheres, that, according to mythologists, one-half of his face was painted bright, the other black and clouded; since he was sometimes in heaven and sometimes in Pluto's realm. He is, therefore, drawn with the serpent-woven caduceus in his hand, alluding at once to North and South latitude; for, with that caduceus he alternately conducted souls to hell, or brought them up from thence, as he is described by Virgil:

——— Hoc animas ille evocat ORCO
Pallentes, alias sub tristia TARTARA mittit. Æn. lib. 4.

As an additional evidence, if any need be ad-

* For many useful hints on the astronomical mythology of the Hindoos, I am proud to acknowledge my lasting obligations to NATHANIEL BRASSEY HALHED, Esq. who has deeply investigated that curious subject, and who, I hope, will be incited by the same ardent love of science which has induced him to become the decided and liberal patron of this undertaking, at some future period, to present the public with the result of his profound and elaborate researches.

duced, how intimate a connection formerly subsisted between the Egyptians and Indians, may be advanced the circumstance of the LION, so much abounding in the hieroglyphics of the latter, and conferring the illustrious title of SING on the families of her noblest rajahs. The lion is rather a native of Africa than the Indian continent; and was, in a particular manner, the object of Egyptian regard, because the Delta was inundated when the SUN entered LEO. It is on that account Plutarch remarks in his treatise, that the doors of the Egyptian temples were ornamented with the *expanded jaws of lions*. In this instance, likewise, there is not only reference to that noble animal who ranges the terrestrial globe, the most expressive symbol of dauntless fortitude; but direct and unequivocal allusion to the LION OF THE ZODIAC.

The SPHYNX, an imaginary animal, compounded of the head and breasts of a virgin and the body of a lion, was holden throughout Egypt in the highest esteem, not only because it pointedly alluded to the power of the same SUN in the signs LEO and VIRGO, but because it was the symbol of the most sacred and profound mysteries. Hence it arose that the Egyptian priests, who, by various symbols, laboured to impress on the minds of their disciples an awful

and deep sense of the mysteries of religion, and the necessity of observing a profound secrecy in regard to the subjects unfolded in the ceremonies of initiation, made the approaches to their temples through a long line of SPHYNXES, forming a solemn and majestic avenue to the abode of deity. On this account too upon the reverse of most of the coins on which either the Egyptian temples or deities are engraven, we observe the figure of Harpocrates, the god of silence, standing with his finger placed on his mouth; "a proper emblem," says Plutarch, "of that modest diffidence and cautious silence which we ought ever to observe in all concerns relative to religion."*

We should be filled with equal astonishment and detestation of that idolatrous race for paying divine honours to so impure an animal as the GOAT, under the name of Mendes, did we not know that Capricorn was one of the signs of the zodiac, and that the asterism, denominated GEMINI, was in the ancient Oriental sphere designated by TWO KIDS. It was not, therefore, the Goat, considered merely as the symbol of PAN, or the great prolific principle of nature personified, as explained by the learned Mr. Knight, that was in their worship of that animal

* Plutarch de Iside et Osiride, p. 75.

solely intended to be adored. Their veneration for the Goat was doubtless highly increased by their astronomical speculations, and it was the sun in Capricorn and Gemini, who was the principal object of that devotion. Of the same nature probably, and originating in the same source, was the worship paid to the RAM, which was the emblem of the solar power in ARIES. Canopus, the god of mariners, or rather the watery element personified, was another of their gods highly venerated; and we shall scarcely be surprised when we find that, in the old Egyptian sphere, Canopus and Aquarius, or the Water-bearer, ARE THE SAME. Mythologists have been perplexed to find out the reason of Scorpio being one of the signs of the zodiac; and even the ingenious reason of the Abbé Le Pluche is not entirely satisfactory.* In the old Egyptian sphere, that sign was distinguished by a Crocodile, and the crocodile was the symbol of Typhon, the evil genius of Egypt, and eternal adversary of Osiris, who was elevated to the zodiac under that emblem. Isis was undoubtedly the first Virgo of the celestial sphere, and she is there placed by that name. Sagittarius again, or the Archer, is, on the Egyptian sphere, called Nephte, and is there

* See Histoire du Ciel, vol. i. p. 9.

designated as the armour-bearer of Osiris, simply by the symbol of an arm, holding the weapons, that is, the flaming ARROW, or penetrating ray, of Osiris, THE SUN. Osiris, the guardian genius and god of Egypt, in the hieroglyphics of that country, is frequently decorated with the head of the sacred Ibis, or the stork, an animal that preys upon the flying serpents, which, in the spring of the year come in swarms from Arabia, and would, if not destroyed, overspread and desolate the country. In the sign we denominate Cancer, Osiris is again brought to our view on the sphere of Egypt, with the head of this guardian Ibis; but, as the sun begins to be retrograde in that sign, they added to it the tail of a CRAB, an animal that walks backward. The meaning of the former symbol being gradually forgotten, it was expunged, and the whole body of Cancer being introduced, instead of it, the sign was denominated from it: but the true meaning of it is SOL RETROGRADUS. The Libra of the zodiac is perpetually seen upon all the hieroglyphics of Egypt, which is at once an argument of the great antiquity of that asterism, and of the probability of its having been originally fabricated by the astronomical sons of Mizraim. By the Balance they are supposed by some to have denoted the equality of

days and nights at the period of the sun's arriving at this sign; and by others it is asserted, that this asterism, at first only the Beam, was exalted to its station in the zodiac from its being the useful Nilometer by which they measured the height of the inundating waters, to which Egyptian custom there may *possibly* be some remote allusion in that passage of holy writ, where the sublime prophet describes the Almighty as *measuring the waters in the hollow of his hand.**

I shall not, at present, prolong these remarks upon the zodiac of Egypt. It is my intention, in the first volume of the HISTORY itself, to present the reader with an engraving of it, when he will see the original figures of which the asterisms, used from age to age, down to this day, to denote the zodiacal signs, are only contractions. Warburton has already remarked the resemblance which some of them bear to the Egyptian hieroglyphics; and he particularly specifies it in the signs Taurus, Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius. All these circumstances united may seem to demonstrate that the zodiac is entirely of Egyptian origin; but it will hereafter appear to be only so in part. Like the Greeks, they altered the figures which were

* Isaiah xl. 12.

already formed to agree with their own mythology. Let us now advert to some other Egyptian symbols that have an astronomical allusion.

One of the most venerated and universal of the sacred symbols of Egypt, conspicuous in all their hieroglyphics, and decorating a thousand gems in the cabinets of Europe, was the SCARABÆUS, OR BEETLE; for, these animals being supposed, by naturalists, to be all males, casting the seed of generation into round balls of earth, as a genial nidus to mature it, and rolling them backward with their hinder feet, while they themselves look directly forward, are considered as proper symbols of the SUN, who, during the period of his retrogradation seems to proceed through the heavens in a direction contrary to the order of the signs.

The crocodile was an animal fertile of symbolical wonders, both in physics and astronomy. Let the astonished naturalist examine his mouth, and he will there find, say they, 360 teeth, the exact number of the days of the ancient year. Let him count the number of the eggs which the female lays at a time, and the amount is 60, a number of great request in the calculations of Asiatic astronomers. It is very remarkable, in regard to certain animals and plants, that some were highly venerated in one region of Egypt,

and held in the utmost detestation in another. The crocodile was one of those animals: for, in the neighbourhood of the lake Mæris, they were regarded as sacred, and there was a particular city devoted to their rites, and called, from them, Crocodilopolis, though its more ancient name was Arsinoe. Here there was a tame one always preserved with great care, attended by a train of priests, who adorned his ears with jewels, and decked his body with ornaments of gold. The most delicate viands were allotted for his food, while living; and, when dead, his body was embalmed, and buried with great funeral pomp. By the inhabitants of Elephantina, on the contrary, and, in general, throughout all Egypt besides, this animal was holden in the utmost abhorrence; because Typhon, the evil genius of Egypt, was thought to have been changed into a crocodile; and, therefore, in their hieroglyphics, that animal was his symbol. By Typhon, I have repeatedly observed, must be understood whatever in nature was gloomy and malignant; and he is, on that account, constantly represented as the implacable enemy of Osiris, the sun, the source of light and the fountain of benevolence. Osiris was in the end destroyed by Typhon; and this probably gave occasion to another symbol, recorded by Horus

Apollo, of a nature exceedingly curious and deserving of notice. "The crocodile," he says, "in the hieroglyphics of Egypt, denoted the EAST and the WEST, which were considered as the EXTREMITIES of the sun's course." This circumstance in a very particular manner denotes the intimate connection subsisting between their physical and theological speculations. They looked with horror on whatever limited the extent of the chearing beam and influence of their beneficent Osiris; and, as Typhon was his destroyer, they typified the East and West, the boundaries of his course, by the crocodile, the acknowledged symbol of Typhon.

The IBIS, a bird resembling the stork, with a long neck and a curved beak, was holden among them in the highest veneration, because, as recently observed, it destroyed the venomous brood of flying serpents, which, coming from Arabia at the commencement of the spring, spread their fatal ravages through Egypt. There were also other curious reasons for their regarding the Ibis with peculiar respect. The first was of a physical kind; for, this bird, Plutarch relates, originally taught mankind the medicinal use of the clyster, that being the method which it takes to cleanse and purge

* Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica, p. 70. Edit. 1615.

itself; and, for this purpose, its extended neck and beak are well calculated. The second was founded on their ardent love of geometrical studies; for, according to the same author, the space between its legs, when parted asunder as it walks, together with its beak, forms a complete equilateral triangle. The third resulted from their astronomical speculations; for, the black and white feathers of this bird are so curiously and alternately blended, as to furnish to the attentive spectator a lively representation of the moon's gibbosity. Under the impulse of the last mentioned sentiments, they thought the aspic, an insect that moves along with great facility and glibness, without any perceptible organs for motion, to be a proper symbol of the celestial orbs, gliding swiftly, but silently, through the expanse of heaven. A more than usual share of veneration was paid to the ICHNEUMON, an animal distinguished for the deadly hatred which it bore to the crocodile, whose eggs it instinctively explored, and, by breaking them wheresoever it found them, prevented the increase of that formidable and pernicious progeny of the Nile.

But not only the race of animals, even the vegetable world, received homage from the servilely superstitious race of Egypt. The first

to be mentioued, as of all others the most venerated, is the majestic Lotos, in whose consecrated bosom Brahma was born, and Osiris delights to float. This is the sublime, the hallowed, symbol that eternally occurs in Oriental mythology; and, in truth, not without substantial reason; for, it is itself a lovely prodigy! it contains a treasure of physical instruction, and affords to the enraptured botanist exhaustless matter of amusement and contemplation. No wonder, therefore, that the philosophising sons of Mizraim* adorned their majestic structures with the spreading tendrils of this vegetable; and made the ample expanding vase that crowns

* The reader will perhaps be astonished to hear that the term MISRA, the most ancient and scriptural name of Egypt, constantly occurs both as a title of honour and as an appellative in the most ancient Sanscreet books. Consult Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 270 And, as a farthet proof of it, take the following passage in the Sacontala, p. 44, a drama, written a century before Christ, and allusive to, as well as descriptive of, events and persons supposed to have flourished a thousand years before even that remote æra, when HASTINAPURA, as is proved by the passage itself, WAS THE CAPITAL OF ALL HINDOSTAN. "O! Gautami, bid the TWO MISRAS, Sarngarava and Saradwata, make ready to accompany my child Sacontala. Our father CANNA is giving orders for the intended journey to HASTINAPURA," where she was to wed the Indian emperor.

its lofty stem, the capital of their most beautiful columns.

In a preceding part of this volume on the Indian theology, I cited Herodotus to prove in what high estimation this plant was anciently holden in Egypt; and, from M. Savary, quoted also in the same page, we learned that the same veneration for this plant continues, at this distant interval, to animate her oppressed progeny. We learn from the former that it was called the Lily of the Nile, from its growing in abundance on the banks of that river; and that the marshes of the Delta were covered with it; that it was a most majestic plant, rising sometimes two foot above the water, having a calix like a large tulip, and diffusing an odour like that of the lily, and that there were two species of it, the one bearing a white, the other a bluish flower.* To make this brief history of the most famous flower of Asia, upon which so much has been already said, and so much more must occur in this work, complete, I shall add the account of its wonderful properties, inserted by Mr. Knight, in his curious dissertation, concerning *a kind of worship*, in which it is a prominent symbol, and which, degrading as it is, his pen has best elucidated. "This plant," he

* See the preceding chapter.

observes, "grows in the water, and, amongst its broad leaves, puts forth a flower, in the centre of which is formed the seed-vessel, shaped like a bell, or inverted cone, and punctuated on the top with little cavities or cells, in which the seeds grow. The orifices of these cells, being too small to let the seeds drop out when ripe, shoot forth into new plants, in the places where they were formed; the bulb of the vessel serving as a matrice to nourish them, until they acquire such a degree of magnitude as to burst it open, and release themselves; after which, like other aquatic weeds, they take root wherever the current deposits them. This plant, therefore, being thus productive of itself, and vegetating from its own matrice, without being fostered in the earth, was naturally adopted as the symbol of the productive power of waters, upon which the active spirit of the Creator operated in giving life and vegetation to matter. We accordingly find it employed in every part of the Northern hemisphere, where the symbolical religion, improperly (says Mr. Knight) denominated *idolatry* does, or ever did, prevail. The sacred images of the Tartars, Japanese, and Indians, are almost all placed upon it; of which numerous instances occur in the publications of Kæmpfer, Chappe D'Auteroche, and

Sonnerat."* This plant is most elegantly depicted in the Heetopades, as "the cooling flower, which is oppressed by the appearance of day, and afraid of the stars.;"† which, Mr. Wilkins observes, alludes to the circumstance of its spreading its blossoms only in the night; and, relative to this plant, there is a passage exquisitely beautiful in the Sacontala, which, though I must cite it hereafter, when treating of the magic and palmestry of the old Brahmins, I am convinced will not offend by repetitition. From this passage, if Sir W. Jones, by the term *ruddy*, meant that the word should be understood in its usual signification, we should be induced to think that, in India, there was a third species of the lotos, of which the leaves were of a dusky red tint. "What!" exclaims a prophetic Brahmin, "the very palm of his hand bears the marks of empire; and, whilst he thus eagerly extends it, shows its lines of exquisite net-work, and glows like a lotos, expanded at early dawn, when the ruddy splendor of its petals hides all other tints in obscurity." Sacontala, p. 89.

A very particular veneration ancientiy prevailed, as well in Egypt as Hindostan, for the ONION. Indeed, Mr. Forster, in his SKETCHES

* See Mr. Knight, on the Phallic Worship, p. 85.
† Heetopades, p. 282.

of Indian Manners,* observes, that it is introduced in the solemnities of religious rites, in the latter country, to impress the greater awe upon the spectators. Their veneration, however, for that vegetable, and their abstinence from it as food, does not arise, as Mr. Crauford in his more extensive Sketches justly remarks,† because its veins, or fibres, of a delicate red colour, resemble that blood, at the shedding of which the Hindoo shudders: this is not the reason, nor has Mr. Crauford favoured us with it. It is astronomy that has stamped celebrity and veneration on the onion; for, on cutting through it, there appears, beneath the external coat, orb within orb, in successive order, after the manner of the revolving spheres. The Chaldeans, however, if Alexander may be credited,‡ long before either of them, adored this very vegetable, and most probably for the very same reason; which may be considered as an additional proof of my hypothesis, that most of the Indian and Egyptian customs originated in that parent-country of the world. Had Juvenal, the severe satirizer of the hortulan idolatries of Egypt, been acquainted with the real cause of the veneration of

* See Mr. Forster's Sketches, inedited, p. 35.

† Mr. Crauford's Sketches, vol. i. p. 61, 2d edition.

‡ Alexander ab Alexandro, lib. vi. cap. 26.

the ancient Memphites for these instructive vegetables, he would, perhaps, with less vehemence have exclaimed,

> O sanctas genes, quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis
> Numina!

But let us return from these minute, however curious, investigations to the consideration of the nobler object, which Plutarch, in writing this essay, had in view; which was, to exhibit at once a complete display of the system of the Egyptian theology; a system, however, which, we have before observed, he himself but imperfectly understood. The philosophizing mythologists of Asia, varying in their own principles, and guided by the respective hypotheses adopted by them, had very differently represented the religion of Egypt. Plutarch, in this treatise, enumerates their different opinions on the subject, which are often diametrically opposite to each other, according as those philosophers themselves followed either the atheistical doctrines of materialism, divulged by Aristotle, or were animated by the nobler principles that swayed the divine Plato. I shall have so much to say, hereafter, on the more ancient and abstruse theology of Egypt, when I come to investigate the Pagan triads of deity, that I shall,

for the present, only summarily state the outlines of their sentiments on this point, and principally as they concern PHYSICS.

According to some, Osiris is the soul of the material universe. He is the active masculine energy that generates and nourishes all things. Isis is represented as the consort of Osiris, because she may be called the feminine part of nature. She is the generative nurse and mother of the world, and the grand receptacle of his benign influences. She is the goddess of a thousand names, the infinite MYRIONYMA. She is endued with the property of receiving all kinds of impressions, and of being converted into all manner of forms, which the SUPREME REASON shall impress upon her. Those, best acquainted with the real purport of the mythologic figures of India, constantly assert the sacred cow, called in the Mahabbarat the cow of plenty, and so universally venerated, to be only the symbol of the earth, which nourishes all things. Though the Isis of Egypt be generally considered as the MOON, the horns of which planet adorn her head, yet those, who have dived deeper into the abstruse lore of their hieroglyphics, make Isis also the earth, the Ceres, the Dea Multimamma, and then it will not appear at all extraordinary that her constant

symbol, like that of the Indian god, should likewise be THE COW.

I have before observed, that if the Egyptians entertained, for some animals and plants, the highest veneration, on account of their being the supposed symbols of the benevolent operations of nature, and the friendly influences of the planets, they held others in the utmost abomination on a contrary account. Thus, notwithstanding all their original reverence for the onion, as a noble astronomical symbol of the revolving spheres, when a more minute attention to the growth and cultivation of that plant had taught them that it flourished in its greatest vigour, *when the moon was in its wane*, the priests of Osiris began to relax in their veneration for it; while, by the priests of Diana, at Bubastis, *i. e.* the MOON, it was holden in extreme detestation. One reason for their rooted abhorrence of SWINE, as an animal obnoxious and impure, was their observing it to be most apt to engender upon the decrease of that orb, though another reason of that detestation, doubtless, was the leprosy and similar cutaneous disorders which its rancid flesh and rich milk tended to produce in those who luxuriously regaled upon them. But there is a third reason for their abhorrence of swine, mentioned by

Mr. Costard, which is infinitely curious, and nearly similar to what was recently observed, relative to the extremities of the sun's course being shadowed out by a crocodile, the symbol of the pernicious Typhon. It is an additional evidence, that there scarcely ever existed a nation so totally involved in astronomical fables as were the Egyptians! The very ancient fable of Adonis, being killed by a boar, arises, Mr. Costard observes, from the name of an Egyptian month Haziram, or July; for the words hazir and hazira signify SUS, PORCUS; and the sun finishing his course, or apparent annual circle, when Sirius rose heliacally, which was in the same month, gave occasion to that ingenious allegory.* But the word Haziram bears some affinity to hazarin, a lettuce; and here, says Mr. Costard, we find a reason for another Egyptian fancy, that Adonis was laid by Venus on a bed of lettuces, and it might have been the occasion of their carrying about at his feast the gardens called the Gardens of Adonis.

According to others of these philosophers, by Osiris and Isis, the Egyptians meant animated matter in general, but in particular *every part of nature that is genial and friendly* to the human race, represented by the sun and moon.

* Costard's Chaldæan Astronomy, p. 129.

the fountain of light and the source of nutrition. On the other hand, they considered Typhon, to whom, among other symbols, was allotted that of the Ocean, that detested dæmon which swallowed up their beloved Nile, as *every part of nature which can be considered noxious and destructive* to mankind. Like time and death, Typhon devoured all things. These principles are for ever at variance, like the Oromasdes and Ahriman of Persia, their exact counterpart, or possibly their prototype. But I cannot help believing that the only genuine prototype is to be found in India, where Brahma, the first-created Dewtah, is, according to the best Indian mythologists, the universal spirit that pervades created matter; and, if not the sun himself, at least *the brother of the sun*; as I observe he is expressly denominated in that ancient Sanscreet treatise, the AMARASINHA. Seeva, the destroying power of India, nearly resembles the Typhon of Egypt, with this difference only, that Seeva destroys to re-produce, whereas the desolating fury of Typhon is only to be appeased by total destruction and boundless annihilation. Seeva's true character is displayed by his symbol; for, if in one hand he grasp the tremendous scythe of TIME to destroy, he, in the other, displays the prolific LINGAM to regene-

rate and to vivify. For what I am going to add, I hope that I shall not incur the censure of my profession; but if, upon so trivial an occasion, the greatest of apostles and wisest of philosophers might without impiety be quoted, St. Paul, to whom the Oriental philosophy of the Gnostics was well known, speaks a language exactly consonant to this; for, finely retaliating upon them for their disbelief of the resurrection, he exclaims to the sceptical Corinthian, Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not *quickened* except it *die!*

It is deserving notice, that, in the Indian mythology, Cali, or Time, is considered as the wife of Seeva, in his destroying capacity, by which the Indians mean only to express the close union of DEATH and TIME. Seeva therefore is not only the *Tempus edax rerum*, but he is also the *Tempus renovator rerum.* When the Egyptians borrowed, as it is probable they did, this doctrine from the Hindoos, it appears to me that they confounded the persons and symbols of the deities they adopted. Typhon, instead of Osiris, should have had the PHALLUS; or do they not mean that the symbol in question belongs to Typhon, when they say, that Typhon stole *the genitals of Osiris*, which, after a long search, Isis recovered? that is to say, the

earth was deluged, and, its produce being destroyed, appeared to be robbed of its fecundity, which Isis, the Egyptian Ceres, the mother of fruits and grain, restored. She is said to have discovered the objects of her research as she traversed the lake Philaë, whither they had floated with the inundating stream. This history may be clearly traced on the Hindoo zodiac, upon which Virgo is represented holding a lamp in one hand, an ear of rice-corn in the other, and standing on a boat in water.

It is, however, our philosopher observes, from this perpetual opposition, or rather this fortunate mixture of these two principles of good and evil, whatever partial and transient evils may in particular instances spring, that there results a general order and harmony throughout the universe, in the same manner, as melody arises from the lyre, which is made up of discords. Thus Hermes, when he invented his testudo, or harp, formed the strings of it of the sinews of Typhon, teaching, as Mentor observes, that out of the most discordant subject harmony may be produced.*

The total sum and result of this comparative parallel of the physical theology of India and Egypt are, that Osiris and Isis, as well as

* Plutarch de Iside et Osiride, p. 95.

Brahma, Veeshnu, and Seeva, being only representatives of the powers creative or created; or, in other words, God and nature personified, assume alternately every form of being, and are successively venerated under every appearance, whether of a celestial or terrestrial kind. We have therefore not only *Isis omnia*, but, *Brahma*, *Veeshnu*, and *Seeva omnia*; they are the supreme generative source OF ALL THAT IS, OF ALL THAT EVER WAS; they pervade all space, they animate all being; and, as has been before observed in the language of the Bhagavat, these beings are EVERY WHERE ALWAYS.

END OF VOL. III.



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